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**THE INDIAN
QUARTERLY REGISTER**

January-June 1926

VOL. I.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY
NRIPENDRA NATH MITRA.
AT THE "DELA PRESS"
108, KHEETER BANNERJEE LANE.
SIBPUR, HOWRAH.

FOUNDED BY PROF. H. N. MITRA

THE INDIAN QUARTERLY REGISTER

BEING A QUARTERLY JOURNAL
OF INDIAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In matters Political, Social and
Economic, Etc..



Volume I] January-June 1926. [Numbers I & II

Editor :—Nripendra Nath Mitra

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PAYABLE IN ADVANCE Rs. 12 ONLY.

VOLUMES: CLOTH BOUND Rs. 7 EACH

LEATHER BACK LIBRARY EDITION Rs. 8 EACH

SINGLE QUARTERLY ISSUES Rs. 3-8.

POSTAGE EXTRA.

PUBLISHED BY
THE ANNUAL REGISTER OFFICE,
SIBPUR, CALCUTTA.

21 JAN 1927.

THE QUARTERLY REGISTER

January-June 1926.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE.
CHRONICLE OF EVENTS—JANUARY—JUNE 1926	..	9
January 1926	...	9
February 1926	...	10
March 1926	...	12
April 1926	...	13
May 1926	...	14
June 1926	...	15
INDIA IN HOME POLITY—JANUARY—JUNE 1926.		
THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE	..	17
THE DELHI A. I. C. C. MEETING	...	17
The Walk-out Motion	...	18
Amendments Moved	...	18
Resolution on the Constructive Programme	...	20
Resolution on the General Elections	...	21
The Responsivists' Amendment	...	21
No-changers and Swarajists	...	22
Management of Budha Gaya Temple	...	24
THE AHMEDABAD A. I. C. C. MEETING	...	26
The Commonwealth of India Bill	...	26
The Sabarmati Pact	...	27
Motion for Special Congress	...	29,30
Indians in South Africa	...	29
The Calcutta Riots	...	30
The Swarajist and Responsivist Split	...	33
Negotiation for a Compromise	...	34
Break-down of Negotiation	...	37
Views of Parties on the Breakdown	...	37
The Responsivists' Statement	...	37
The Liberal—Responsivist Pact	...	38
The Nationalist Party's Statement	...	39
Pt. Motilal Nehru's Statement	...	40

THE ALL INDIA SWARAJ PARTY

The Bombay Council Swarajists	...	43
The Responsivists' Programme After Cawnpur...	...	43
The Bombay Swarajists' Statement	...	44
The C. P. Responsivists' Statement	...	44
The Responsivists' Akola Conference	...	45
The Responsivists' Manifesto	...	46
The Swarajists in the Assembly	...	46
The Sabarmati Conference	...	48
The Sabarmati Agreement	...	49
The Swarajists' Allahabad Meeting	...	49
The Responsivists' Bombay Meeting	...	50
The Secession of the Responsivists	...	51
The Liberal-Responsivist Coalition	...	51

THE INDEPENDENTS & LIBERALS

Pt. Malaviya's Move	...	51
The Delhi Meeting	...	52
The Lahore Meeting	...	53
The Liberals' Coalition Move	...	54
The Coalition Manifesto	...	54
The United Nationalist Conference	...	55
Lala Lajpat Rai's Bradlaugh Hall Speech	...	57

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BENGAL

The Bengal Muslim Party	...	65
Sir Abdur Rahim's Manifesto	...	66
The Tide of Communalism	...	68
The Calcutta Communal Riots	...	70
The Police Commissioner's Report	...	70
The Second Phase of the Riot	...	82
The Bengal Pact Controversy	...	85
The B. P. C. C. Meeting	...	85
Resol. on the Krishnagore Conference	...	86
the Hindu-Muslim Pact	...	88
Dissolution of the Executive	...	90
The Congress Karmi Sangha's Manifesto	...	92
Split in the Swaraj Party	...	94
The Seceders' Manifesto	...	94
Mr. Sen Gupta's Statement in Reply	...	97
Mr. Bose's Reply in Contradiction	...	98
The Goswami—Sen-Gupta Statement	...	99
The Indian Press on the Bengal Pact	...	99

THE EUROPEAN & ANGLO INDIAN POLITY—JANUARY—JUNE 1926.**THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATIONS**

The Calcutta Europeans on Reforms	...	101
The Cal. Europeans' Address to Viceroy	...	102
The Viceroy's Reply	...	103
The Punjab Europeans on Rights and Privileges	...	104

The Punjab Governor on British Protection	...	106
The Madras Europeans on Pol. Situation	...	107

THE ANGLO—INDIANS AND DOMICILED EUROPEANS

The Associations Annual Meeting	...	110
Col. Gidney Entertained	...	111
The Round Table Conference	...	111

INDIA IN PARLIAMENT & ABROAD—JANUARY—JUNE 1926

INDIA IN PARLIAMENT

The Asiatic Bill in Lords—24 February	...	113
" " " 19th May	...	113
The Judicial Committee Bill	...	115
Viscount Cave's Speech	...	115
Viscount Haldane's Speech	...	116
Lord Banbury's Speech	...	116
Viscount Dunedin's Speech	...	118
Lord Jessell's Speech	...	119
The Text of the Bill	...	119

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Class Areas Bill	...	121
The Bill Referred to Select Committee	...	122
India Government's Telegram to the Union Cabinet	...	124
The Union Cabinet's Reply	...	125
Further Representation by the Indian Government	...	127
Union Government's Final Reply	...	128
India Government's Statement in the Legislature	...	128
The Bill postponed in the Union Assembly	...	130
Government of India's Statement on same	...	132
Further Correspondence with Union Government	...	133
Telegram from India Government	...	133
Union Cabinet's Reply	...	133
Union Government Agrees to a Conference	...	137
Proceedings of the Select Committee on the Bill	...	140
The Paddison Deputation's Memorandum	...	141

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

Sir Atul Chatterjees' Speech	...	144
Lala Lajpat Rai's Speech	...	148

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY & PROVINCIAL COUNCILS.

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—JANUARY—JUNE 1926

The Viceroy's Opening Address	...	153
The Legislative business	...	161
The Insurance Bill	...	161
Other Official Bills	...	162
Bar Committee Bills	...	162
Trade Union Bill	...	163
Amendments moved	...	164

	PAGE.
Release of Political Prisoners	... 165
Mr. Shafce's Resolution	... 165
Mr. Goswami's Amendment	... 166
Sir A. Muddiman's opposition	... 167
The Amendment Carried	... 169
Question on Bengal Detenues	... 169
Trade Union Bill	... 170
Further Amendments Moved	... 170
Middle Class Unemployment	... 171
South Africa Motion postponed	... 173
Official Bills	... 174
Trade Union Bill	... 174
Vagrancy in India	... 175
Proposed Enquiry in Retrenchment	... 175
Judicial Committee of Privy Council	... 176
Contempt of Courts Bill	... 178, 181
Weekly Wages to Workmen	... 178
Transfer of Property Act	... 181
Supplementary Demand for Railway Board	... 181
The Trade Union Bill passed	... 183
Reduction of Postage rates	... 183
Burma Expulsion of Offenders' Act	... 184, 192
The Naturalisation Bill	... 185
Criminal Procedure Code Bill	... 186, 192
Motion for Repeal of Regulation III of 1818	... 186
Reforms for the Frontier Province	... 193
Steel Protection and other Official Bills	... 194
The Railway Budget Introduced	... 195
Official Bills Introduced	... 196
Debate on the Bengal Regulation III of 1818	... 197
General Discussion of the Railway Budget	... 198
Voting on Railway Demands	... 202
Demand for Railway Board	... 203
Mr. Asharya's Cut for 20 Lakhs carried	... 205
Protest Against Slow Indianisation	... 206
Reduction of Third Class Fares	... 207
Other Railway Demands	... 210
Mandalay Detenues' Hunger Strike	... 208
Mr. Goswami's Adjournment Motion Carried	... 206
The Debate in the Assembly	... 208
The Financial Statement for 1926-27	... 211
The Finance Member's Speech	... 211
Review of the Year 1925-26	... 212
Budget Estimate for 1926-27	... 215
The Finance Bill	... 220
General Discussion of the Budget	... 221
Voting on Budget Grants	... 224
The Walk-out of the Swarajists	... 224
Mr. Jinnah's Adjournment Motion	... 224
Pr. Motilal Nehru's Speech	... 225
President's Observation and Explanation	... 229
Demand for 'Opium' Etc Granted	... 231

Demand for the Executive Council	...	...	233
Mr. Jinnah's Motion on Constitutional Advance	...	...	233
Executive Demand Rejected	...	...	239
Consideration of the Finance Bill	...	...	240
The Finance Bill Passed	...	...	243
Factories Act Amend. Bill	...	...	244
Income Tax Amend. Bill	...	...	244
The Archaeological Fund	...	...	245
Geneva Labour Convention	...	...	246
Government's Opium Policy	...	...	247
Reforms for the Frontier Province	...	...	249
Resolution on Mercantile Marine Report	...	...	251
Emigration to Guiana	...	...	252
South African Resolution postponed	...	...	253
The House Adjourned	...	...	254

THE COUNCIL OF STATE—JANUARY—JUNE 1926 .. 255

The Viceroy's opening Address	...	...	255
Royal Commission on Agriculture	...	...	256
Travelling Allowances	...	...	257
Indian Delegation to the League	...	...	257
Royal Commission on Reforms	...	...	258
Mr. Sethna's Resolution	...	...	258
Discussion of the Railway Budget	...	...	261
Official & Non-Official Bills	...	...	262
Contempt of Courts Bill	...	...	263
Medical Education Bill	...	...	263
General Discussion of the Budget	...	...	264
Judicial Committee of Privy Council	...	...	267
Autonomy for Tamil Districts	...	...	268
The Finance Bill Passed	...	...	270
The Income Tax Bill	...	...	271
The Indian Divorce Act Amend. Bill	...	...	271
Viceroy's Address in Proroguing the Council	...	...	272
Viceroy Certifies Rejected Grants	...	...	273
Review of the Work of the Indian Legislature	...	...	272(b)
Swarajist Work in the 6th Session of the Assembly	...	...	272(e)
Swarajist Work in the 2nd Reformed Assembly	...	...	272(h)

PROVINCIAL COUNCILS—JANUARY—JUNE 1926.

THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL .. 273

Village Self-Government Bill	...	...	273
President's Conduct Resented	...	...	274
Financial Statement for 1926-27	...	...	275
Non-official Resolutions	...	...	276
Motion for Removal of President	...	...	277
General Discussion of Budget	...	...	279
Voting on Budget Grants	...	...	281
The Swarajists' Walk-out	...	...	281

THE U. P. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Primary Education Bill	...	284
Budget Statement for 1926-27	...	285
General Discussion of Budget	...	287
The Swarajists' Walk-out	...	287
Voting on Budget Grants	...	287
The Agra Tenancy Bill	...	291
The Municipalities Act Amend. Bill	...	292
Non-official Resolutions	...	292
The January Session	...	293
Non-official Bills & Resolutions	...	294

THE C. P. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The Governor's Opening Address	...	296
The Financial Statement for 1926-27	...	297
General Discussion of Budget	...	298
Voting on Budget Grants	...	300
Ministers' Salaries Refused	...	300
Cuts Restored by Governor	...	302

THE PUNJAB LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Amendment to Standing Order	...	303
Sikh Gurdwaras Amend. Bill	...	303
The Financial Statement for 1926-27	...	303
Non-official Resolutions	...	304
General Discussion of the Budget	...	305
Voting on Budget Grants	...	306
The Swarajists' Walk-out	...	306
The Punjab Money-Lenders' Bill	...	311
Trade Development in the Punjab	...	311

THE ASSAM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Transfer of Sylhet to Bengal	...	312
Budget Statement for 1926-27	...	314
Unemployment Among Educated	...	315
Assam Land Revenue Re-assessment Bill	...	315
Supplementary Demands	...	316
General Discussion of the Budget	...	317
Assam Rural Self-Government Bill	...	317
Primary Education Bill	...	318
Voting on Budget Grants	...	318
The Swarajists' Walk-out	...	318
The Council prorogued	...	319

THE B. & O. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Relief for Orissa Floods	...	320
Non-official Bills introduced	...	321
B. & O. Civil Courts Amendment Bill	...	321
Bengal Tenancy Act Amendment Bill	...	322
Chota Nagpur Rural Police Amendment Bill	...	322
The Patna University Resolution	...	323

Financial Statement for 1926-27	...	...	324
Non-official Resolutions	...	...	325
General Discussion of Budget	...	...	326
Voting on Budget Grants	...	...	327
Swarajists' Walk-out	...	...	327
The Council Prorogued	...	...	328

THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Excise Advisory Committee Report	...	...	329
Official Bills	...	...	331
Financial Statement for 1926-27	...	...	331
General Discussion of Budget	...	...	332
Voting on Budget Grants	...	...	333
The Swarajists' Withdrawal	...	...	333
Nurses and Midwives Bill	...	...	337

THE BOMBAY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Governor on Back Bay Reclamation	...	...	338
Financial Statement for 1926-27	...	...	339
General Discussion of Budget	...	...	340
Indian Stamp Act Amendment Bill	...	...	341, 345
Court Fees Increase Bill	...	...	341
Voting on Budget Grants	...	...	342
The Swarajists' Walk-out	...	...	344
Court Fees Act Amendment Bill	...	...	345
Other Official Bills	...	...	346
The Back Bay Reclamation Scheme	...	...	347

THE BURMA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Financial Statement for 1926-27	...	...	349
Registration of Kittima Adoption	...	...	350
Non-Official Resolutions	...	...	350
The Thathameda Tax	...	...	351
Mandalay Riot Prisoners	...	...	352
Land Mortgage Banks	...	...	352
Abolition of Dev. Commissioner's Post	...	...	352(a)
Non-officials Walk-out	...	...	352(a)
Mr. Munshi's Adjournment Motion	...	...	352(b)
General Discussion of Budget	...	...	352(b)
Voting on Budget Grants	...	...	352(c)
The Council Prorogued	...	...	352(f)

OFFICIAL REPORTS—JANUARY—JUNE 1926.

THE TAXATION ENQUIRY COMMITTEE REPORT

Personnel of the Committee	...	...	353
Text of the Report	...	...	353
Notes of Dissent	...	...	372

THE RAWLINSON COMMITTEE REPORT

Personnel of the Committee	...	...	373
Terms of Reference	...	...	373

Text of the Report	...	...	374
Comments of the Indian Press	...	...	380
THE PUNJAB JAILS ENQUIRY COMMITTEE REPORT	..	..	382
Personnel of the Committee	...	...	382
Government of India's Resolution on the Report	...	...	382
Text of the Report	...	...	383
THE ADMINISTRATION REPORTS—1924—25	..	..	386
The B. O. Administration Report	...	...	386
The C. P. Administration Report	...	...	388
The Bengal Administration Report	...	...	389
The Madras Administration Report	...	...	395
CONGRESS & CONFERENCES—JANUARY—JUNE 1926.			
THE ALL-INDIA HINDU MAHASABHA	..	..	397
The Welcome Address	...	...	397
The Presidential Address	...	...	398
Proceedings and Resolutions	...	...	400
The Sewak Associations	...	...	400
Removal of Untouchability	...	...	401
Confusion in the Sabha	...	...	404
The Sangathan Resolution	...	...	405
Reforms for Frontier Province	...	...	406
Resolution on Council-Entry	...	...	406
Pt. Matilal's Statement	...	...	407
THE ALL-INDIA KHILAFAT CONFERENCE	..	..	409
The Welcome Address	...	...	409
The Presidential Address	...	...	409
Khilafat Committee's Creed	...	...	411
Communal Dissensions	...	...	411
Uproarious Scene in the Conference	...	...	412
Sangathan Movement Condemned	...	...	412
Other Resolutions	...	...	413
THE CENTRAL SIKH LEAGUE	..	..	414
The Presidential Address	...	...	414
Proceedings and Resolutions	...	...	415
THE BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE	..	..	417
The Presidential Address	...	...	423
Proceedings in the Open Conference	...	...	417
Proceedings in the Subjects Committee	...	...	418
The President Vacates Chair	...	...	419
Meeting of the Delegates	...	...	419
Mr. J. Chaudhury Elected President	...	...	420
Mr. Sen Gupta's Statement	...	...	421
THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA CONFERENCE	..	..	425
The Karachi Conference	...	...	425
The Bombay Conference	...	...	427

Chronicle of Events

January 1926.

- 2 Jan. '26 Second Session of the Provincial Trade Union Conference at Bombay, Rai Sahib Chandrika Prosad presided.
Indian Chemical Society Meeting under Sir P. C. Ray's presidency at Bombay—Sir P. C. Ray gave his opinion that Lavoisier was the discoverer of Oxygen.
- 3 Jan. '26 Railway Board's Annual Report on Indian Railways showing a net profit Rs. 12.12 crores published.
- 4 Jan. '26 Annual Meeting of the Indian Science Congress under the Presidency of Mr. Albert Howard at Bombay.
Ninth Session of the Indian Economic Conference at Bombay—Prof. C. J. Hamilton presided.
- 7 Jan. '26 Workers' Meeting at Madras under Major Graham Pole's Presidency resolved to start Indian Fabian Society to carry on a Socialistic propaganda.
Rai Bahadur Sardananda Dowera's Resolution on the transfer of Sylhet to Bengal passed in Assam Council.
- 9 Jan. '26 All-India Trade Union Congress at Madras under the Presidentship of Mr. V. V. Giri protested strongly against the South African Asiatic Bill.
Sikh Members of the Punjab Council resolved not to accept Ministry as long as the Gurdwara prisoners were not unconditionally released.
- 11 Jan. '26 Messrs. Khaparde, Kane, Kantikar and Aney resigned membership of C. P. Swaraj Party.
- 12 Jan. '26 Baroda celebrated Jubilee of H. H. Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwar.
- 13 Jan. '26 Gaekwar of Baroda remitted land revenue arrears and abolished Cotton Excise Duty and introduced telephones for all towns as Jubilee concessions.
- 14 Jan. '26 Viceroy nominated Official and Non-Official members to the Council of State. The Non-officials included Sir D. Wacha, K. C. Ray, Major Akbar Khan, Raja Nawab Ali Khan, Raja Harnam Sing, Raja Charanjit Sing and Maharaja of Burdwan.
Sirdar Jogendra Singh appointed Minister of Agriculture, Punjab.
Non-Burman Offenders' Expulsion Bill received the assent of Viceroy.
Members of the South African Deputation, Messrs. J. W. Godfrey, V. C. Pather and A. A. Mirza arrived at Madras.
Madras Presidency Students' Conference met under the Presidency of Mr. B. O. Pal.
- 16 Jan. '26 Bombay Citizens' meeting under H. H. Aga Khan's presidentship—protest against South African legislation.
Bombay Swarajists statement not to contest the by-elections published.
- 20 Jan. '26 Lord Reading opened the Assembly at Delhi—regretted that Indian leaders had not made a response to Birkenhead's gesture.
Lahore High Court acquitted 8 and upheld the conviction of 42 men in the Babar Akali Case.
- 23 Jan. '26 Maharaja of Baroda's banquet in honour of the Viceroy and Lady Reading—The Maharaja claimed the restoration of original sovereignty or ancient privileges—The Viceroy promised careful and impartial consideration.
Nagpur citizens in a public meeting strongly protested against South African legislation.

- 26 Jan. '26 29 Akali leaders including Sirdar Bahadur Sirdar Mahatab Singh acquitted on giving undertaking to work out the Gurudwara Act.
Mr. T. O. Goswami's amendment demanding open trial of all political detainees carried in the Assembly by 53 to 45 votes.
- 28 Jan. '26 Nagpur Congress Committee passed vote of 'no confidence' in its President Dr. Cholkar.
- 29 Jan. '26 Mr. Bamechandra Rao presiding over the Conference of National Prohibitive Party urged Prohibition as a National Ideal.
Moderate Conference in Albert Hall Calcutta pleaded for a common platform.
- 30 Jan. '26 Indian Chamber of Commerce inaugurated in Calcutta.
- 31 Jan. '26 Lucknow citizens in public meeting under the presidency of Hon. Raja Sir Rampal Singh protested against the South African Class Areas Bill.

February 1926.

- 2 Feb. '26 Home Member heckled in the Assembly about Mr. Colman (A. C. I. D. officer of the Punjab) succeeding Prof. Rushbrook Williams as the Director of Public Information, Govt. of India.
- 3 Feb. '26 Calcutta citizens in a meeting at Town Hall under Lord Bishop's presidency protested against the anti-Indian legislation of the South African Government. The Lord Bishop declared his sympathy with the Indian settlers and characterised the Bill as contrary to the principle of humanity and justice.
"Trading Taxation Bill" passed in the Assembly.
Government demand for increased salary for two members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council defeated in the Assembly by 50 against 40 votes.
- 4 Feb. '26 Mr. Biswanath Dass sentenced to 6 months' rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 5,000 for drawing Rs. 2,110 for khaddar propaganda, thereby causing wrongful loss to Government.
- 6 Feb. '26 Trade Union Bill and Contempt of Court Bill passed in the Assembly.
Amendment for reduction of the Ry. demand of 68 lacs by 37 lacs by Mr. M. K. Acharya carried by 50 to 49 votes in the Assembly.
Madras Council President over-ruled by the Governor on adjournment motion of South African Bill.
The Viceroy welcomed the members of the new Council of State at Delhi and announced the formation of a Royal Indian Navy.
- 10 Feb. '26 Criminal Code Amendment Bill introduced in the Assembly by 52 votes to 45.
- 12 Feb. '26 Mr. Amarnath Dutta's Bill for repealing the Bengal Regulation discussed in the Assembly—Mr. Donovan delivered a most provocative speech—Lala Lajpat Rai ridiculing his enthusiasm remarked: "An Irish Bureaucrat is a different commodity from an Irishman in Dublin."
All Hindus found guilty and convicted in the Panipath riot case by Mr. Waugh, Special Magistrate.
- 13 Feb. '26 Surma Valley Conference at Habiganj—Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta presided.
- 14 Feb. '26 Responsive Co-operators—Conference at Akola. Mr. M. K. Jayakar presided.
Mr. Godfrey of the South African deputation interviewed by a "Free Press" representative said: "We had an interesting interview with Mahatmaji who expressed his willingness to go to South Africa if necessity arose."
Mr. K. C. Roy raised the debate on the Royal Commission of Agriculture in the Council of State.

- 16 Feb. '26 Repeal of the Burma Expulsion of Offenders' Act carried in the Assembly by 69 votes to 33, the European non-officials voting with Indian officials.
Lunacy Act passed in the Assembly.
- 17 Feb. '26 Bengal Village Self-Government Bill thrown out in the Bengal Council.
- 18 Feb. '26 President's arbitrary ruling in Bengal Council—Swarajists and Nationalists walk out in protest.
Mr. Sorabji's appeal to Viceroy for a demand for Round Table Conference for South Africa.
Sir Charles Innes presented Railway Budget in the Assembly—wagon orders placed with Indian firms.
Mr. Sethna's resolution in the Council of State for the immediate appointment of a Royal Commission lost.
Sir Abdur Rahim's amendment on electoral rules moved in the Bengal Council without due notice carried.
Land Revenue Sales Act passed in the Behar Council.
- 19 Feb. '26 First sitting of the Indian Industrial Congress at Delhi.
Mr. Donald presented annual budget in the Bengal Council—increase of 4 lacs in police grants.
Mr. Amar Nath Dutta's Bill to repeal Bengal Regulation not taken into consideration in the Assembly by 49 votes to 46.
Gokhale anniversary meeting at Bombay—Sir Stanley Reed presided.
- 20 Feb. '26 Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and other detainees at Mandalay Jail resorted to hunger-strike as a protest against Government refusal for Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja and other holy festival allowances.
Sir J. C. Bose elected President of the Indian Science Congress at Lahore.
- 22 Feb. '26 Assam Governor opened the Winter Session of the Assam Council at Shillong.
Resolution on the Compulsory Physical Culture for students between the ages 12 and 16 passed in the Bengal Council.
Mr. L. P. Bhopatkar elected Leader of the Swarajya Party in the Bombay Council.
- 23 Feb. '26 "Forward" of Calcutta brought to light Lt.-Col. Mulvany's evidence before the Indian Jail Committee about the treatment to political prisoners in or about 1915 and on the questionable manner in which reports regarding them were drawn.
Demand for the Railway Board thrown out in the Assembly by 51 votes to 48.
Salary of the President raised to one thousand in the Assam Council.
Assam Council rejected by 19 to 10 votes the resolution proposing transfer of Cachar to Bengal.
- 24 Feb. '26 Report on Bengal's Public Health for 1924 published; terrible infant mortality and malaria's heavy toll.
Motion for removal of President defeated in the Bengal Council.
Calcutta Corporation recorded its emphatic protest against the Government's attitude in the matter of the treatment of Sj. Subash Chandra Bose and other detainees in Mandalay Jail which forced them to resort to hunger strike.
Motion for a reduction of 20 lacs in respect of cost of Lee Concessions to Railway officers carried in the Assembly by 60 votes to 46.
- 25 Feb. '26 A Censure motion—by way of a cut of one thousand Rupees protesting against the slow Indianisation of the services carried by 58 against 45 votes in the Assembly.
Reduction of third class passengers' fares carried by 53 against 41 in the Assembly.
Mr. T. C. Goswami's adjournment motion about the hunger-strike among the state prisoners in Mandalay Jail carried by 57 to 40 votes in the Assembly—All non-official members including a number of nominated members voted in its favour.
Bengal Council President held adjournment motion on hunger strike of Mandalay prisoners out of order.

Citizens of Rangoon at a public meeting under the Presidency of U. Paw Tun, sympathised with the Bengal detenus' hunger-strike in Mandalay Jail.

- 26 Feb. '26 Report of the Taxation Enquiry Committee published. Calcutta citizens recorded their deep indignation at the inhuman treatment meted out to Bengal's "flowers" at Mandalay Jail—Sir P. C. Roy presided.
- 27 Feb. '26 Maharaja Holkar of Indore abdicated in favour of his son. Working Committee of the All-India Spinners' Association met in the Satyagraha Asram.
- 28 Feb. '26 Calcutta observed spontaneous and complete "hartal" in honour of her noble sons behind the prison bars at Mandalay.

March 1926.

- 1 Mar. '26 Two hundred and ninety-four Associations declared unlawful by the Burma Government. Sir Alexander Muddiman made a statement on hunger-strike at Mandalay Jail and informed the Assembly that the Telegraphic communication of Lala Lajpat Rai and Mr. T. C. Goswami appealing to the prisoners to give up hunger-strike had been communicated by him to the prisoners. Sir Basil Blackett presented budget in the Assembly—The total surplus amounted to rupees three hundred five lacs. An Indian archaeological fund started with a Government grant of 50 lacs.
- 2 Mar. '26 Adjournment motion on hunger-strike of Political prisoners disallowed by Burma Govt. Contempt of Courts Bills passed in the Council of State—the Swarajists opposing it. Mr. Rama Rao moved the circulation of the Medical Education Bill in the Council of State.
- 3 Mar. '26 Calcutta Corporation's address to Rt. Hon. Mr. V. S. Sreenivas Sastri—Mr. Sastri paid tribute to the self-sacrifice of Subhas Chandra Bose which sounded like a chapter of romance to him and concluded that "we shall never be wanting in public spirit and courage necessary to stand shoulder to shoulder with all those in the country by whatever designation they may be called in political parlance in upholding the rights of the citizens none too many and none too sure." Fifth Baroda State Subject's Conference under the presidency of Mr. Sane demand full responsible Government.
- 4 Mar. '26 State-prisoners break fast in Mandalay Jail. Swarajists and Independents abstained from attending the Assembly at Delhi.
- 5 Mar. '26 Members walked out in protest against unfair attitude of Government in Burma Council—the House adjourned.
- 6 Mar. '26 Mr. Y. M. Kale, Swarajist elected President C. P. Council defeating Sir S. K. Chitnobis. The All-India Congress Committee on a motion of Mr. Sreenivas Iyengar passed a resolution calling upon the Swarajists to withdraw from the Assembly and the Councils after voting against the first demand of grant in the Assembly on the 8th March.
- 8 Mar. '26 Swarajists headed by Pandit Motilal Nehru walked out from the Assembly—President Mr. Patel adjourned the unrepresentative House. Swarajist members walked out from the Council of State, from the Behar Legislative Council, from the Assam Legislative Council, from the Punjab Legislative Council. Bombay Swarajists abstained from attending the Council.

- 9 Mar. '26 Ministers' salaries thrown out in the C. P. Council by 88 votes to 15—the Swarajists withdraw.
- 10 Mar. '26 Pandit Motilal Nehru resigned membership of the Sken Committee. Burma Council adjourned, movers of resolution absent.
- 11 Mar. '26 U. P. Swarajists walk out from the Council.
Mr. Jinnah's motion for the early appointment of a Royal Commission defeated in the Assembly.
- 12 Mar. '26 Sir A. C. Chatterjee and Mr. L. J. Kershaw appointed to represent the Government of India at the International Conference at Geneva. Mr. B. N. Gilchrist and J. E. P. Currey to be advisers. Sir Arthur Froom to represent the employees, Mr. M. Daud and S. Chughajan to be advisers.
- 13 Mar. '26 Independents issued manifesto abstaining from attending the Bengal Council according to Cawnpore Congress mandate.
Raja Narendra Nath presided over the 9th session of Hindu Mahasabha at Delhi—dwelt on the need of physical regeneration and the removal of stigma of untouchability.
Ulemas of Bengal and Assam under the presidency of Maulana Idris condemned the views of Sir Abdur Rahim in his address as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Jamiatul-Ulema-I Hind that Bengal should not be made the medium of instructions and held that Bengal is the mother tongue of the Mussalmans of the province and its adoption as medium would contribute to the educational progress.
- 14 Mar. '26 All-India Cantonments Conference at Ambala—demand of more franchise and more reforms.
- 15 Mar. '26 Swarajist members walked out from the Bengal Council—Independents excepting three abstained from attending.
Council of State reversed the Assembly's decision refusing to enhance the salaries of the two Privy Council members.
Eighth session of the Agarwala Marwari Conference at Delhi—Seth Jamn Lal Bojaj presided.
- 16 Mar. '26 Madras Nationalists and Swarajists headed by the Nationalist leader C. V. S. Narasingha Raju walked out of the Council.
Abolition of the Cotton Excise Duty passed in the Assembly. Finance Bill passed.
- 17 Mar. '26 Mr. J. K. Munshi's censure motion on Government about political prisoners in Burma carried by 88 to 33 votes in the Burma Council.
- 20 Mar. '26 Convocation of the Bihar Vidyapith at Patna under the presidency of Mr. Rajagopalchari.
Pt. Motilal Nehru presiding over the Benares District Conference said that the walkout from the Councils was not a dodge but a protest and that India was not a selling commodity.
- 22 Mar. '26 Chittaranjan Seva Sadan opened for patients in Calcutta.
- 25 Mar. '26 Communal fracas at Fatepur. Arya Samaj procession stopped by Mahomedans.
- 27 Mar. '26 Bengal Government report on North Bengal flood published.
Gurukul Founder's Day celebrated. Swami Brahmananda presided.
Lala Lajpat Rai delivered a forceful speech at Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore criticising Pt. Malaviya's anti-Congress move and extolling the Swarajists.
- 31 Mar. '26 Personnel of Royal Commission of Agriculture announced.

April 1926.

- 1 Apl. '26 Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta elected Mayor of Calcutta.
Secretary of State rejected Nizam's claim for the restoration of Berar—Lord Reading's reply that no Ruler of an Indian State could claim to negotiate with the British Government on an equal footing.
The Viceroy-elect Lord Irwin and Lady Irwin landed at Bombay.

- of music before mosque as unalienable right of Hindus backed by evidences.
- 4 June '26 Bengal Government resolution on music before mosque issued—no music before Nakoda mosque.
India Government's resolution on Public Accounts Committee published at Simla.
- 5 June '26 Lala Lajpat Rai's resolution on Indian Labour adopted at Geneva—warmly supported by Japanese delegation.
- 7 June '26 The Viceroy opened Conference of Directors of Agriculture at Simla and announced the Royal Commission on Agriculture.
- 10 June '26 Hindu-Mahomedan Leaders' Conference convened by Maulana Mahzarul Huq at Chapra—Moslems to stand by Congress.
Mahomedan Councillors tender their resignation letters to the Mayor of Calcutta.
- 12 June '26 Calcutta Hindu Sabha's protest against Government communique about music before mosque.
- 14 June '26 Incendiarism broke out in Rawalpindi—Military pickets on the Scene. Eleven Musalmans, two Hindus and one Sikh killed.
- 16 June '26 Deshbandhu Day celebrated throughout India.
India Government communique about the transfer of Sylhet to Bengal published.
- 18 June '26 Nomination to the Executive Council of the B. P. C. C. declined by Mr. T. C. Goswami, N. C. Chunder, S. C. Bose etc.
Akali brush with police at Amritsar. Ladies participate, Secretary of S. G. P. C. seriously wounded.
- 19 June '26 Police raid in Calcutta—several arrested under the Ordinance Act.
Deshbandhu's portrait unveiled by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar in the Mayabbaram Municipal Hall, Tanjore.
- 20 June '26 Manifesto on the present situation and a clear cut programme issued under the signature of Mr. T. C. Goswami, B. C. Roy, Sarat Chandra Bose, N. R. Sirkar and N. C. Chunder.
All India Press employees' Conference in Calcutta—Mr. T. C. Goswami presided.
- 27 June '26 Convocation of the Women's University at Poona—Sir Moropant Joshi delivered the Convocation Address.
- 28 June '26 East Godavari District Conference at Sitanagaram, Madras, requested Assam Congress to inaugurate civil disobedience.
Draft constitution of the All-India Political Sufferers Conference adopted at Lahore meeting. Swami Govindananda, President "All-India Political Sufferers Conference" said the office will be at Karachi till the Assam Conference.
Women's Indian Association under the presidency of Misses Sherbanee and F. Vakil demand the removal of ban on women being elected to the legislatures.
Punjab Legislative Council—non-official members gained victory on the remission of taxation.
Prisoner Reform Bill passed in the Punjab Council.
Fifth annual meeting of B. N. Railway Union at Calcutta.
- 30 June '26 Madras Council—Court fees Bill passed reducing taxation to the extent of 9 lakhs.

INDIA IN HOME POLITY

• January-June 1926.

The All-India Congress Committee

The A. I. C. C. at its meeting held at Patna on the 22nd September 1925 resolved that "the Congress do now take up and carry on all such political work as may be necessary in the interest of the country" and provided that "the work in connection with the Indian and Provincial Legislatures shall be carried on in accordance with the policy and programme laid down by the Swaraj Party under the Constitution framed by the Party and the rules thereunder, subject to such modifications made by the Congress as may be found necessary from time to time for the purpose of carrying out the said policy." This resolution was confirmed by the Congress at its Cawnpore session in December 1925 and the basic principle on which all political work was to be carried on was laid down in the following terms : —

"This Congress reiterates its faith in Civil Disobedience as the only effective weapon to be used in the last resort to enforce the national claim and vindicate our national honour, but realises that the country is not now ready for it and in view thereof this Congress resolves that the guiding principle in carrying on all political work shall be self-reliance in all activities which make for the healthy growth of the nation and resistance to every activity, governmental or other, that may impede the nation's progress towards Swaraj.

As regards the work in the Councils the Congress adopted "on behalf of the country the terms of the settlement offered to the Government by the Swaraj and Independent parties of the Assembly by the resolution passed on the 18th February 1924", and in view of the fact that there had been no response on behalf of the Government, the Congress resolved upon certain steps to be taken in the various legislatures culminating in the withdrawal of all Swarajist members from them. By the same resolution the Congress called upon the A. I. C. C. to frame a programme of work, including the education of the electorates, and authorised it to lay down the lines upon which the general elections were to be run by and in the name of the Congress and to state clearly the issues on which Congressmen were to seek election. The power thus conferred upon the A. I. C. C. was subject to the important proviso that "the policy of non-acceptance of offices in the gift of the Government shall continue to be followed until, in the opinion of the Congress, a satisfactory response to the settlement offered by the Assembly is made by the Government". The A. I. C. C. at its meeting held at Delhi on the 6th March, 1926 gave the necessary directions for the carrying out of the mandate of the Congress. The proceedings of this meeting are given below.

The Delhi A. I. C. C. Meeting

DELHI—6TH & 7TH MARCH 1926.

The All-India Congress Committee met on the 6th March in the afternoon in the committee room of the Western hostel, Delhi to discuss the question of the Swarajist walk-out. There were members from all provinces numbering about one hundred. The resolution passed by the Special

Committee recommending a walk-out was read. This Special Committee which was appointed by the Cawnpore Congress to consider whether any response had been made by the Government to the national demand, had recommended to the All-India Congress Committee the following resolution:—

"This Committee having carefully considered the statements made by the Governor-General in his inaugural addresses to the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State and the answers given by the Home Member to the questions put in the Assembly and to the resolution of Mr. Phiroze C. Sethna and amendment to it moved by Seth Govind Das in the Council of State, is emphatically of opinion that the said statements and the answers amount to a refusal on the part of the Government to concede the demands for Reforms made by the Assembly. In coming to this opinion this Committee is fortified by the resolution of the Swarajya party in the Indian Legislature (copy of which is attached). It is therefore resolved as follows: That the Swarajya Party in Central and Provincial Legislatures do now take the steps laid down in Resolution 7 (B), (1 and 2) (8) passed by the Congress at its Cawnpore session".

The aforesaid resolution suggested a walk-out from the Legislatures and it formed the subject matter of discussion of the A. I. C. C. on this day. As soon as this resolution was read, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar on behalf of the working committee of the Congress, moved a resolution describing the Government's attitude as one of coercing the nation into abject submission and calling upon Swarajists to walk-out on March 8. The resolution runs:—

1.—The Walk-out Motion.

"This meeting having taken into consideration the pronouncements made in the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly by the Governor-General and the Home Member referred to in the report of the Special Committee, is of opinion that the insistence of the Secretary of State and the Government of India on full co-operation by representatives of the people under existing conditions clearly demonstrates the intention of Government to coerce the nation into abject submission, without making any advance on the present vicious system of Government. This Committee therefore has no option but to adopt the recommendations of the Special Committee and calls upon Swarajist members of the various legislatures to follow the course laid down in Regulation VII (B) (1), (2), (3) passed by the Congress at its Cawnpore session. This Committee hereby calls upon the party in the Assembly to leave their seats after raising the constitutional issue once again by moving on the 8th March that the first demand for grant which may come up for discussion be omitted. The Committee calls upon the Swarajist members of all legislatures to conform to the other directions contained in the said resolution of the Congress, and engage themselves in carrying out the programme here-in-after laid down". (This programme is mentioned in the resolution on Constructive Programme.)

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar said they must look at the resolution as practical men with a sense of responsibility. The resolution of the Cawnpore Congress had stated that if Swarajists remained in the Assembly they must vote for rejection of the Finance Bill, but not that they were bound to remain in the Assembly after announcing to the Government that they would not remain. Mr. Iyengar therefore said that the Swarajists after announcing to the Government on March 8th that they would walk-out, must act accordingly and not remain to vote for rejection of the Finance Bill. It would be absurd to remain in the Assembly after that announcement. It was not in any spirit of irresponsibility that the Committee suggested a walk-out, but in pursuance of a deliberate resolution passed at Cawnpore.

Mr. R. K. Shunmugam Chetty seconded the resolution.

Amendments Moved.

Mr. B. Das moved as an amendment his proposition that if a Royal Commission was appointed, then Congressmen should agree to work the

present Reforms. He moved this proposition in light of the circumstances that had happened in the last three months. The President ruled the motion out of order.

Mr. Govardhandas moved an amendment to the effect that the resolution should suggest to all Nationalists besides Swarajists to come out of the Assembly and Councils.

Mr. S. Satyamurthi moved an amendment that the resolution calling upon Swarajists to withdraw, must have an equally binding effect on all Congressmen in the Assembly and Councils. He asked them to remember that this was the All-India Congress Committee speaking in the name of the Congress, and if this resolution was passed it must be binding on all Congressmen, otherwise they would be putting a premium on disloyalty to the Congress. If the non-Swarajist Congressmen dared disobey, let them face the consequences. If, because this resolution was mandatory, non-Congressmen like Pandit Malaviya resigned from the Congress, let them resign. The Congress would not lose anything by it. The Congress had survived such withdrawals from it by Moderates and it would survive if these non-Swarajists went out. The Congress would commit suicide if this resolution had no binding effect on all Congressmen.

Mr. Asaf Ali supported the amendment of Mr. Satyamurthi.

Lala Lajpatrai said this committee had no jurisdiction to make this change. The Swarajist Party could force its discipline on its members but not the Congress, whose resolutions were not mandatory. It was only by adopting the amendment of Mr. Satyamurthi that the Congress would commit suicide. Speaking on the resolution itself the Lala did not agree with the legal interpretation of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar that the Cawnpore Congress resolution meant that Swarajists must walk out after intimating this act and should not stay on till the Finance Bill came up.

Mr. Abhyankar opposed the amendment of Mr. Satyamurthi because the Congress had no right now to expect those non-Swarajists, who had gone into the Councils by fighting their own battle, perhaps against the Swarajists, to withdraw from the Assembly and Councils. Let them stay on and have their hearts desire. They would very soon be disappointed, and the experiences they would have would be their best lesson. Why then, should this Committee say anything? Without this Congress Committee calling upon them to walk out, they, the non-Swarajist Congressmen, might have themselves to walk out (Laughter).

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar agreed with Mr. Satyamurthi in his view that all Congressmen should be expected to join in the walk out, but for that he would have a separate clause and not interference with this clause in the resolution, which was based on ideas of discipline of the Swarajists.

Mr. B. B. Adwani also opposed the amendment, observing that it was for electorates to give whatever treatment they liked to non-Swarajist Congressmen at the next election.

Mr. Ramdas Pantulu pointed out that the Congress jurisdiction, so far as Council work was concerned was over its own agents, the Swarajists and not on all.

Mr. Satyamurthi modified his amendment by a separate clause, that the Congress Committee expects all non-Swarajist Congressmen also to withdraw.

Pandit Motilal considered the proposal as highly undignified because

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

[DAILY

non-Swarajist Congressmen had entered into the Councils on their own ticket and not on the Congress or Swaraj ticket.

Mr. Satyamurthi's amendment was lost.

Lala Goyardhandas's amendment was withdrawn.

The resolution, as moved by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, was carried, there being about a dozen dissentients mostly from the Central Provinces and Bombay.

Messrs. Patel & Nehru asked to Resign.

After Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar's resolution regarding the Swarajist walk-out had been carried, Mr. Srikrishnaidas Lullah moved a resolution that in consequence of the resolution just passed, Mr. Patel should resign the the Speakership of the Assembly and Pandit Motilal Nehru should resign his membership of the Sken Committee.

The press representatives were asked to withdraw, but were promised a statement by the Secretary regarding the result of the debate. The debate lasted two hours and was very lively. Eventually the resolution of Mr. Lullah was withdrawn.

Following is the official statement issued by the Congress regarding the discussion in the Congress Committee about Mr. Patel and Pandit Motilal continuing to be the Speaker and a Sken Committee member, respectively:—

"The question of whether Pandit Motilal Nehru should be asked to resign the Sken Committee, and Mr. Patel the presidentship of the Assembly, was taken up in camera. A resolution was moved by a member to this effect and a long debate followed. Pandit Motilal Nehru, however, made a statement that without agreeing with any arguments adduced against his continuance on the Sken Committee, he had come to the conclusion that it was not consistent with the mentality which was actuating the Swarajists to walk out of the Councils for any Swarajist to continue in any office which required co-operation in any degree with the Government. He did not therefore wish to remain any longer in the Sken Committee and had made up his mind to resign his seat on that Committee. He stated further that he did not wish to subject his decision to the vote of the House. On this the mover wanted permission to withdraw his resolution, which was given by the House."

2.—The Constructive Programme.

The Committee then proceeded to discuss the plans of Congressmen after the Swarajist walk-out.

On the Motion of Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar the Committee passed the following resolution regarding work in the Country:—

"That in pursuance of the Cawnpore resolutions this Committee adopts the following programme of work for the year 1926. The Provincial Congress Committees shall at once take steps to reorganise the Congress Committees in the districts, tahsils, or taluqas and villages in their respective jurisdictions. The District, Tahsil, or Taluq, and Village Committees shall, (A) organise propaganda and enrol Congress members under the directions of their respective Provincial Committees and (B) popularise the spinning wheel and Khaddar under the directions of Mahatma Gandhi, promote national education and organise labouring classes. The Working Committee shall take steps to explore avenues for an amicable settlement of the communal differences prevailing in the Country and report the A. I. C. C., as early as possible if it is able to find a satisfactory basis for such settlement. In case no such basis can be found, the said Committee will report its own views on the merits of the matters in dispute between the various Communities, and make recommendations to the All-India Congress Committee."

3.— The General Elections.

There was a good deal of discussion regarding the next general elections. Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar moved an official resolution :—

"Subject to such modifications as may be made by the Congress in its session of December 1926, the ensuing general elections will be run on the following programme by the Congress and Swarajya Party organisations working in co-operation with each other. The general policy of Congressmen in the Assembly and the various Councils will be one of determined resistance and obstruction to every activity; Governmental or otherwise, that may impede the nation's progress towards Swaraj, and in particular Congressmen in the Legislatures shall, (A) refuse to accept offices in the gift of the Government until, in the opinion of the Congress, satisfactory response is made by the Government, (B) refuse supplies and throw out budgets until such response is made by the Government except when the Working Committee instructs otherwise, (C) throw out all proposals for Legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its power, (D) Move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the advancement of the economical, agricultural, industrial, and commercial interests of the country, (E) Take steps to improve the condition of Agricultural tenants by introducing and supporting measures to secure fixity of tenure and other advantages with due regard to the rights of zamindars, (F) Generally protect the rights of labour, agricultural and industrial, and adjust the relations between landowners and tenants, capitalists and workmen."

The Hon. Mr. Ramdas Pantulu seconded the resolution.

Responsivists' Amendment

Dr. Moonje, Responsive co-operationist, moved in substitution of the whole resolution the following amendment :—

"That in accordance with Resolution No. 7 of the Cawnpore Congress, the Provincial Congress Committees do take steps with a view to capture the different Legislatures, to set up Congress candidates as far as possible for all the seats in the different Legislatures open to elections, so that if a solid standing majority of Congressmen is secured after the next general elections in the majority of provinces, a full trial may be given to the programme of continuous consistent, and persistent obstruction as originally conceived by the Swaraj Party for the purposes of preventing the very functioning of the different Legislature. That a full trial of the programme of continuous, consistent, and persistent obstruction means that all measures of the Government, good, bad, or indifferent, are thrown out, and no resolutions are moved or bills introduced or questions asked, which may have the effect of working the Legislatures to any purpose whatsoever other than that of exposing the bureaucratic soul of the Government in its nakedness, and the budget will be thrown out and no seat on any of the Committees appointed by the Legislatures or the Government is accepted. That in case this solid standing majority of Congressmen is not secured in the Legislatures of the majority of provinces after the general elections, this Committee recommends that the Congress Party in the different Legislatures be allowed either by themselves along or in combination with other nationalistic groups in their respective legislatures, to adopt a policy of responsive co-operation, which means capturing the present machinery of the Government so far as may be possible under our present circumstances, so that opportunities may be created for improving the material prosperity of the people, thus strengthening them in their resistance to Government and for obstructing Government at every step in its attempt to thwart our progress towards Swaraj."

Mr. Abhyankar upon a point of order, pointed out that the Congress had expressly decided at Cawnpore that no offices in the gift of Government should be accepted.

Mr. Mahomed Ali supported Mr. Abhyankar's point of view, and said that only a special session of Congress could change the programme and policy.

The President upheld the objection and ruled the amendment of Dr. Moonje out of order, stating that the policy of the Congress could not be changed until there was a satisfactory response.

Babu Brijkishore Prasad (Bihar No-Changer) objected to the expression that general elections be run by the Congress and Swaraj Party organisations working in co-operation with each other. His point was that there was no need for the Swaraj Party being mentioned when they had been merged into Congress.

Mr. B. Das moved an amendment that the policy of Congressmen in the Assembly and Councils be one of opposition and not obstruction. This was lost.

The amendment of Mr. Brijkishore Prasad, that elections be run by and in the name of Congress with no special reference to Swarajists, was carried by a large majority. As amended, this clause reads :—

“That the next general elections will be run by and in the name of the Congress on the programme outlined, subject to such modification as may be made by the Congress in December 1926.”

The resolution as amended was carried.

No-Changers and Swarajists.

The difference between the No-Changers and Swarajists which found feeble expression in Babu Brijkishore's amendment excluding the mention of Swarajists, came up again when Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar moved the following official resolution :—

“In the selection of candidates for the Assembly and the various Councils the executives of the several Provincial Congress Committees shall act in consultation with the executives of the Swarajya Party in the respective Provinces. In case of any difference of opinion arising between the executives of the Provincial Congress Committees and the Swarajya Party, either executive may refer the matter to the All-India Working Committee and the decision of the Committee shall be final.”

There was a crop of amendments, all aimed at giving the final decision in the choice of candidates to the Congress Committee and forcing the Swarajist organisations to appeal to the Working Committee, while the original proposition provided for the matter being referred automatically to the Working Committee whenever there was difference of opinion between the Provincial Congress Executive and the Provincial Swarajist Executive.

All amendments were vetoed and the original proposition was carried. There were several other official resolutions to be moved regarding details of arrangements for election. It was however 7 p. m. The Committee, therefore, adjourned till next day.

SECOND DAY—7TH MARCH 1926.

Controversial questions having been disposed of the day before, the All-India Congress Committee did not sit long on this day to dispose of the remaining items on the agenda. After a short discussion the Committee adopted the following resolution relating to the conduct of elections :—

“Where a part of single constituency for any legislature is in the territorial jurisdiction of one Congress Province, and the other part or parts in that of another Congress province, the candidate or candidates for such constituency shall be selected by the executive of all the Congress Provinces concerned, acting jointly in consultation with the executives of the Swarajya Party in the said province.

“The names of the selected candidates for all legislatures shall be reported to the Working Committee of the Congress for confirmation. No candidates other than those whose selection is confirmed by the Working Committee as aforesaid, shall be supported by

Congressmen and Congress organisations. Every Congress candidate shall sign the pledge in the following form before he is finally adopted by the Congress :—

"I being a member of the Indian National Congress, do hereby offer myself as a candidate on behalf of the Congress for election to the Legislative Assembly (provincial Legislative Council) from the constituency of and declare that if my candidature is approved I shall fully conform to all the rules and directions regulating the conduct of election by members of the party, which have been or may be issued by the A.I.C.C. or its Working Committee, or the Executive of the Provincial Congress Committee in accordance with the instructions and resolutions of the A.I.C.C. or its Working Committee. If my candidature is not approved I undertake not to contest elections.

"I further agree that in case I am elected I shall faithfully carry out the policy and programme of work laid down in resolutions of the Indian National Congress adopted at Cawnpore and the resolution of the A.I.C.C. (now adopted) and in any election manifesto to be issued by the Working Committee. I shall also faithfully observe all rules and carry out all instructions which may be issued from time to time by the A.I.C.C. and its Working Committee, or by the Party in the Assembly (Council) for the guidance of the elected members of the Legislative Assembly (Prov. Legislative Council.)

"I pledge myself to vacate my seat in the Legislature in case I wilfully fail to carry out the policy and instructions of the Congress or the A.I.C.C. or its Working Committee, or the party in the legislative Assembly or the Council."

"The Working Committee will issue from time to time such other and further direction as may be necessary.

"This Committee allots a sum of Rs. 25,000 for initial expenses of necessary propaganda and other work in connection with the general elections to be spent under the directions of the Working Committee.

"This Committee appeals to the electorates and constituencies of the various legislatures in the country to support the Congress candidates to the said legislatures in preference to all others.

The President then fixed the 13th April for All-India collection of funds for South African Indians. In this connection Pt. Motilal pointed out that in view of the resolution regarding the Swarajist walk out on the 8th of March from the Assembly, the Swarajists would not be in the Assembly when the amendment he had given notice of would come up for discussion. That amendment had the approval of all sections in the Assembly and the Government also were in agreement with it except in regard to the clause requesting His Majesty's veto in case the Anti-Asiatic Bill was passed by the South African Parliament. The only fear was that the Government would oppose this particular portion of the resolution. If the Government did not oppose it, the amendment would be carried in toto by the Assembly. The Government had promised to allot a day between the 18th and 24th but the absence of the Swarajists should not be misunderstood. Indeed it could not be. He continued, "We shall not be in the Assembly, not because we would not vote for the South African resolution—the resolution and the amendment are ours (of Swaraj party)—but because of the other circumstances which have forced us now to leave the Assembly. There is no use my asking the Swarajists, who are walking out to-morrow and leaving Delhi shortly, to come back for the debate. But we want to declare that it is the sense of the All-India Congress Committee and the Swarajists who are walking out, that that amendment is right and proper. This declaration, I hope, will make our position clear to all concerned." A resolution was passed to issue a statement on the lines of Pandit Motilal's speech.

4.—Other Resolutions

On the motion of Mr. Ramdas Pantulu seconded by Seth Govindas a resolution was passed urging all provinces to start volunteer organisations and

give financial support to the movement. Such organisations, said the mover, would be useful in carrying on Congress propaganda, as also for starting civil disobedience if necessary.

On Pandit Motilal Nehru's motion it was resolved to communicate to the Swaraj Parties of the Provincial Councils now in session by wire the decision regarding the walk out and calling upon them to act accordingly. The attention of the Central Provinces Council Swarajists is to be also drawn to the Cawnpore resolution and the Swarajist member there are to be called upon to attend the Council and throw out the budget including the salaries of ministers.

Management of Budha Gaya Temple

Then there was a good deal of debate on the future management of the Budha Temple at Bodh Gaya. This arose on the report presented by Babu Rajendra Prasad of the Enquiry Committee appointed by the Congress. He pointed out that this temple was originally built by the Buddhists and repaired from time to time by the Buddhist kings of Burma and Ceylon, who had ordered the building of Dharamsalas for the use of the Buddhists. This was in the 13th Century. The repairs conducted by the Buddhists in the 19th century were not according to the archaeological notions of the Government of India at that time, and so the Government of India themselves conducted the repairs. The law courts had held that the temple was a Buddhist temple and that the Mahant was merely carrying it on. The Committee had found on enquiry that in the 18th century a Hindu Sadhu came and settled at a spot near the temple where he founded a small monastery which had now grown into a big one, and the Sadhu's disciples had been in possession of the place for nearly 200 years. Regarding the mode of worship Babu Rajendra Prasad stated that the Mahant did not want to be disturbed especially as he promised not to interfere with the Buddhist rights. The committee recommended that there must be a Joint Committee of both Hindus and Buddhists because the Hindus regarded Budha as an Avatar, and in order to remove misapprehension in the minds of Government the committee suggested that Government shall be represented by the Hindu Minister of the Behar Government for the time being. The Mahant had large properties yielding three lakhs a year. The committee did not want to have anything to do with this landed property. The offerings were very little. The Committee found no evidence for the allegation that the Buddhists offered meat to Budha or that the Mahanta offered sacrifices every year. Concluding Babu Rajendra Prasad moved for the adoption of the report and that the Mahant of Budha Gaya and the Buddhists be asked to consent to the arrangement suggested in the report that both Hindus and Buddhists should be assured the fullest liberty of worship according to their own method; that a committee consisting of five Buddhists and five Hindus, one of whom shall be the Mahant of Budha Gaya and another the Hindu Minister to the Government of Behar and Orissa for the time being, be formed and the management and control of the temple and of worship in it should be entrusted to the said committee and that the committee should have no connection with the properties attached to the Math of Budh Gaya.

Swami Sachidanand Saraswati (Buddhist) sent by the Maha Bodhi Society, suggested that the control of the temple be given over entirely to

the Buddhist. This suggestion was embodied in the form of an amendment moved by Mr. Shunmukam Chetty and seconded by Mr. Prakasam and lost.

Maung Tok Kyi moved that the committee consist of ten members, whether Buddhists or non-Buddhists, to be elected by the Buddhists of Burma, India, Nepal, and Ceylon. This was also lost. Maung Tok Kyi, in the course of his speech, pointed out that the robe and painting on the image of Buddha were disgusting to the Buddhists. Babu Rajendra Prasad, in winding up the debate, pointed out that the recommendations embodied in the report followed the line of least resistance and was the best method of managing the temple. If the Buddhists opposed it then the principal party concerned would be spoiling the chances of a better management of the temple. If they accepted it then it would encourage them to negotiate with the Mahant. The resolution was then adopted. Following is the text:—

"This Committee thanks the sub-committee on the Bodhi Gaya temple for their able and exhaustive report and resolves that their report be adopted and that the Mahant of Bodhi Gaya and the Buddhists be asked to consent to the arrangement suggested therein, *viz.*, (a) that both Hindus and Buddhists should be assured full and liberty of worship according to their own methods; (b) that a Committee consisting of five Buddhists and five Hindus one of whom shall be the Mahant of Bodhi Gaya and the Hindu Minister to the Government of Bihar and Orissa for the time being be formed and the management and control of the temple and of the worship in it should be entrusted to the said Committee; (c) that this Committee should have no connection with the properties attached to the Math of Bodhi Gaya."

This closed the business of the All India Congress Committee. After the All India Congress Committee finished its labours the Special Committee appointed by the Cawnpore Congress considered the requests of the various Provincial Council Swarajists regarding the walk-out.

As regards the United Provinces and Bengal, the Committee decided that, having regard to the fact that the Tenancy Bill, now before the Bengal Legislative Council, and the Tenancy and Revenue Bills, now before the U. P. Council, are of vital importance to the masses of agricultural population, the Swarajist members of these Councils be permitted to attend the meetings of the respective Councils when the said measures are taken up.

Regarding Bombay the Swarajists were given permission to attend only for rejecting the Development Budget (Backbay Scheme) and Taxation Bill, and not for other purposes and for other days.

The Assam Swarajists wanted to stay on in the Council, but the Committee reported that the permission could not be granted.

Regarding Madras, Mr. Satyamurthi suggested attendance regarding the Malabar Tenancy Bill. The Committee found that no special action was necessary.

After the Special Committee, the General Council of the All-India Swaraj Party approved of the decision arrived at by the All-India Congress Committee and the Special Committee.

The Ahmedabad A. I. C. C. Meeting.

AHMEDABAD—4TH & 5TH MAY 1926.

The next meeting of the A. I. C. C. commenced at Ahmedabad on the 4th May. The object of the meeting was to ratify the agreement arrived at between the Swarajists and Responsivists at Sabarmati on the 20th April last (*See Poste*). The meeting which was first advertised to meet at 4 p.m., and then fixed for 7, did not commence till nearly 9. The members were getting more and more impatient at the delay in the arrival of the President and Pandit Motilal Nehru, and when it was at last announced that the two were still in consultation with the Jayakar group trying to compose their differences over the interpretation of the terms of the pact and when it was subsequently known with what results, many members were heard regretting the troubles they had taken to attend the meeting. Such a beginning was likely to have put the house in a distinctly hostile mood throughout the sitting. About seventy-five members in all attended. Besides the National Party group led by Sir Moropant Joshi, Mahatma Gandhi was sitting near the President. A few ladies were also present.

Mrs. Naidu in her opening speech said that the purpose with which the meeting had been specially called was the ratification of the Swarajist-Responsivist pact. She had invited the Responsivists to be present at the meeting, but they could not see their way to accept the invitation. In spite of the differences on the interpretation of the pact she was hopeful that their unanimous desire for unity would prevail and help them to arrive at an agreement. She extended a hearty welcome to the members of the different political parties who had responded to her invitation. She then referred to the South African question and proposed that a message⁶ be sent to the Union Government and the leaders, conveying a sense of satisfaction felt by India regarding the postponement of the Asiatic Bill.

Mr. Singaravelu Chetty raised a point of order and the consideration of the question was, therefore, postponed till next day.

The Commonwealth of India Bill.

Pandit Nehru then proposed that a committee be appointed consisting of Mr. Srinivasa Ayengar, Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, and Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, and Mr. B. Shivarao assisting them, to consider and report on the Commonwealth of India Bill.

Mr. T. Prakasam, opposing the consideration of the Bill, said that Dr. Besant herself should have moved the proposition at a Congress session before giving a final shape to it. Mr. B. Das supported the proposal.

Mr. Satyamurti, opposing, said that there was no sanction behind the Bill. It further was tantamount to accepting the authority of the British Parliament to grant or not to grant Swaraj to India. It was beneath the dignity of the Congress to accept such a position with regard to Parliament.

After a few more members had spoken for and against the proposition, Pandit Nehru, replying, pointed out that by appointing a committee to consider the Bill the Congress was not committing itself in any way. The Committee might adopt or reject it as they thought fit. It was a measure that would soon come up before Parliament and if passed, would be placed

on the Statute Book, whether the Congress had expressed its opinion on it or not. The Congress must take up the same attitude on this Bill as it did in regard to the Asiatic Bill. Their stand in respect of the latter Bill had been partially successful and if they were to let their position regarding the Commonwealth of India Bill go undefined their case would go by default and they would be the losers by it.

On being put to vote the proposal was lost by a large majority. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, Mr. Manilal Kothari, Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar and a few others voting for it.

The Sabarmati Pact.

The chief item on the agenda paper was then read by the General Secretary, namely, that the consideration of the ratification of the Sabarmati Pact be taken up.

Mr. Basanta Kumar Majumdar, on behalf of the Bengal contingent, at this stage moved an adjournment of the House to consider the question of the Calcutta riots. Mr. A. R. Iyengar protested saying that such a thing had never been done before under the rule. A few more members from the Bengal group strongly desired that the question should take precedence over all others.

Sir Moropant Joshi on behalf of his group thanked the President for the special courtesy shown to them and urged that the question of the Pact be taken up for discussion.

Pandit Nehru then made a statement of the results of negotiations with the Responsivists on the Pact which he said had been signed by each group under certain impressions entirely different from those of the other. Latest development was that when the Responsive Co-operation party met the previous day in Bombay they adopted a resolution by which members of the party should support the Pact on a certain understanding of its implication, the principal aim being that Reforms should be worked for all they were worth even as they now were. He had himself prepared a draft resolution which he intended the A.I.C.C. to adopt. Therein he has made clear his own interpretation of the Pact whereby condition given by the late Mr. Das in his Faridpur speech should first be fulfilled before response could be considered satisfactorily. Thus there were two entirely different interpretations of the Pact signed by the two sections. Sabarmati compromise had therefore failed.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar now read a letter from the Responsivists stating that in view of the difference in the interpretations of the pact between the signatories the compromise had broken down. As the A.I.C.C. would not therefore be called upon to consider it they thought no purpose would be served by their attending that day's meeting.

Pandit Nehru, after reading through the letter, stated that the statement made therein that "Pt. Nehru found himself unable to adhere to the terms of the pact" was not correct. He was unable, he explained, to adhere to the terms as understood by them. He was prepared to abide by the pact as he understood it. He reiterated that under these conditions the pact automa-

tically dropped. (Voices— It has fallen through between you. Was it to hear about that we came all the way from our homes ?)

The President now asked if the National party section had anything to say or any suggestion to make.

Sir Moropant Joshi said he would not be able to make any suggestion, now that the pact had been dropped and there was no other question before the house.

Maulana Mohamed Ali made a vehement speech insisting that the doors of the Congress should be shut to all rebels. There was a time when he thought welcoming rebels in Congress was very desirable and necessary. But now he was convinced that broken wings should be lopped and not permitted to approach the golden threshold of the Congress. No rebel, he declared, was wanted within the Congress.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar said that they must not spoil the negotiations by suggesting that others should not join the Congress. They must try to attract as many as possible and thus throw open the doors of the Congress. "We must allow others, if we can do so, without sacrificing our principles. I want to propose a vote of thanks to Pandit Nehru for the sincere efforts which he made in trying to bring about the agreement".

Mr. B. S. Kamath, Liberal, next spoke. He said they had come there with the fullest hope that the Sabarmati Pact would be ratified and an agreement arrived at. It was however extremely regrettable that it would not be ratified by the A.I.C.C. He was surprised that two eminent lawyers could not know what they were talking about or signing. He continued: "We came for unity, and that unity is to-day farther away than it was even before."

Mr. Prakasam said that they were ready to allow them to enter the Congress. The united Nationalists had sanctioned group civil disobedience, and hence they were closer to each other. There was now nothing to keep them away from the Congress.

Mr. Satyamurti stated that they must not remain aloof: "Come in and convince us" he concluded.

Maulana Shaikat Ali said that every one must keep his own conviction but they must join the Congress. The Government had the power and the purse, and they were utilising those things in the fight against the people. They were insulting every party. "If we do not combine nobody will be able to save our country" he declared.

Dr. Besant said that until now the Congress doors were open only to those who believed in N. C. O. But, after Belgaum, she did not see any reason why everybody should not join the Congress. But she thought that there should be no tyranny of the majority over the minority. The decisions of the majority should not be binding on the conscience of the minority. "If I am to be tongue-tied in the Congress, I object to take an active part." She felt that it was of vital importance that the country should be united. She would like to take an active part in Congress work, even by remaining in the minority. "I do not think those who do not obey the majority view are traitors. I want to see India free. I am ready to work with you for Swaraj. We must cease quarrelling. The third party profits by our quarrels. We must all unite and try to make India free."

A vote of thanks to Pandit Nehru was then passed.

Motion for a Special Congress.

After this Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya made a strong plea for unity and proposed the following motion :—

"The A.I.C.C. recommends that at a special session of the Congress the following rule be adopted in relation to acceptance of office :—When the majority of the elected members of the Congress party in any legislatures should be of opinion that the objects of the party will be advanced by acceptance of ministries or other position of power, responsibility and initiative which are open to election by or are otherwise responsible to the people's party within the legislatures, members of the party may accept such offices subject to the constitutional control of the party".

In moving the proposition Pandit Malaviya said that further modifications should be made in the rules of the Congress regarding Khaddar wearing and permission to all political associations accepting the Congress creed to send in their representatives direct to the Congress. This, he said, would be the last time that a proposal for unity would be made, as it was already late and so many members were desirous of taking part in the discussion over his proposal.

Mr. B. Das seconded Pandit Malaviya.

Maulana Mohammad Ali said that he was willing to eliminate Khaddar if that stands in the way of union. Whatever the differences, they must remain in the Congress.

As it was becoming late further consideration on this motion was adjourned till next day. Mahatma Gandhi, though taking no part in the discussion, was present almost till the end of the meeting and left only about an hour before the adjournment.

SECOND DAY—5TH MAY 1926.

Indians in South Africa.

The A.I.C.C. resumed its session next day, the 5th May with Mrs. Naidu in the chair and first took up for consideration the draft resolution prepared by Mahatma Gandhi on the South African situation. The resolution is as follows :—

The A.I.C.C. congratulates the Government of India and the Union Government upon the postponement of the Areas Reservation Bill pending the deliberations of a Conference between the two Governments.

The A.I.C.C. further congratulates the South African Indian Deputation and the Indian settlers on the happy result of their efforts.

The A.I.C.C. tenders its respectful thanks to Mr. C. F. Andrews for his great sacrifice and for his energy and undying hope and faith without which it would have been impossible.

The A.I.C.C. while noting the happy result of the Government of India's negotiations, so far warns the public against slackening the efforts on behalf of the Indian settlers of South Africa and hopes that they will not rest until the position of the settlers is placed on an honourable and satisfactory basis.

The President is authorised to send the message of congratulation to the Union Government.

Mr. Satyamurti, in moving the resolution, said that it dealt with an entirely noncontroversial subject and was sure to be acceptable to all parties. He drew attention to the fact that the resolution did not thank the Government of India, but only congratulated them. One significant aspect of the situation was that for the first time the Union Government had agreed to

negotiate with India on a footing of equality without reference to a third party. The South African Indian Congress had insistently pressed for a Round Table Conference and it was a triumph for them that they had got it. He accepted Mr. Gandhi's interpretation of the phrase "western standard."

The Calcutta Riots.

The next question that was taken up related to the Calcutta riots. The draft resolution ran as follows :—

The A.I.C.C. profoundly deplores and expresses its great concern at the recent riots, in the heavy loss of life, serious injuries to hundreds of Indians, desecration of places of worship and loss of property and conveys its deep sympathy to the families of the deceased as well as to the injured. It calls upon the citizens of Calcutta to devise measures in consultation with men of light and leading in different communities to prevent a repetition of such regrettable occurrences in future.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, in moving the resolution, declared that there was no doubt that the origin of the riots was to be traced to the up-country Hindus and Mussalmans coming into Calcutta. Hardly had there been a case of rioting caused by Bengal Hindus and Bengal Mussulmans. If there was any trace of communal spirit even among these latter it was only due to the contact with undesirable elements from up-country. The remedy that he would suggest to counteract this spirit was for the All-India leaders to concentrate on that problem to the exclusion of every other. Mr. Sen Gupta would reiterate his conviction that communal divisions alone could not account for these outbursts but that there were intelligent brains that had used these differences for their own political purposes. He again urged that the great leaders should consider this the only one question before the country. He was sure that if they did not do so even the elections and political work would be a failure.

Mr. Hamid Khan seconded the resolution.

Mr. Singaravelu was of opinion that the chief reason behind the communal tension was the Khilafat, Sangathan and other communal organisations fostering a spirit of communalism.

Mr. D. B. Adwani moving an amendment that "All-India leaders" be added before "the citizens of Calcutta" in the resolution, said that one particular care that the leaders should take in issuing statements to the press was to see that it was not all one-sided. He was referring particularly to the statement recently issued by Mr. Mahomed Ali. Mr. Adwani also pleaded for the formation of vigilance committees.

Dr. P. C. Guha Roy thought that if the "Goondas" had been rounded up even in the very beginning of the disturbance there would have been less bloodshed.

The resolution was then unanimously carried, as amended, the mover accepting the amendment.

Motion for Special Congress.—(Contd.)

Further discussion on Pandit Malaviya's resolution for calling a Special Congress was then resumed. This provided the occasion for a free and frank exchange of views not only between the National Party section, who

were again present at the president's special invitation, and the A.I.C.C., but also between the Mussalman section headed and represented by the Ali Brothers and the Hindu section led by Pandit Malaviya. The proceedings were very lively, with only a very slight tinge of personality, especially between the latter two sections.

There was considerable discussion on the question whether the A.I.C.C. under the constitution could call a special session of the Congress, especially in view of the presence at this meeting of only about 75 out of about 350 members of the committee. Such an important decision could not, it was contended, be taken without giving the members who were not present an opportunity of expressing their views in the matter.

Sir Moropant JOSHI was the first to speak on this day on Pandit Malaviya's resolution. His was an exceedingly friendly and conciliatory speech. He wanted to make it quite clear that this was the first step towards a possible larger and larger unity with the Congress. He regretted that the pact had gone. It would, he thought, cause a great deal of pain in the country. The welcome given to his group made him very glad. He would place before them certain considerations and to make out a cause for the holding of a special session of the Congress to discuss and explore avenues of a complete re-union. The first difficulty in their way was the creed of the Congress which, since the Nagpur session, had come to mean certain things which the National party could not accept. Swaraj should be limited in its implications to dominion status. Peaceful and legitimate means should also be so restricted as to exclude mass civil disobedience and general non-payment of taxes. The condition regarding Khaddar wearing should be relaxed. These were some of the questions on which a satisfactory solution, acceptable to all concerned, could be evolved by free and frank meetings. He would treat the present occasion as the first step for opening their hearts to each other as a platform for further negotiations. Furthermore, even if it should fail in its larger objectives, their coming together would at least eliminate personal misunderstandings.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI, speaking on behalf of the Swarajists, attempted to meet the issues raised. Regarding the Congress creed he said that dominion status now-a-days meant freedom to go outside the empire, but the Congress creed could not on that account be restricted to mean "within the empire," as there were others who had equally strong objections to be tied down to such an interpretation. Doubts regarding its interpretation by a large majority of Congressmen should have been dispelled by a definite rejection by two or three Congresses of Hasrat Mohani's resolution declaring independence as the goal of the Congress. As to the question regarding the acceptance of offices even the minority report of the Muddiman Committee had concluded that Dyarchy could not produce better results. This was even more forcibly borne out by the declarations of the Liberals who had enjoyed terms of office under the Act. Whatever little influence and power they had formerly possessed was due to non-co-operation. The difference in their influence now and then was shown by the recent supercession of Col. Chaudhary in Madras. History proved that no power could be got out of working the constitution. No valid objection could be raised against civil disobedience. The difference between group and mass civil disobedience was negligible. As for the special

session of the Congress he would ask the Liberals to agree to abide by its decision, whether, it went for or against them. That would be only in keeping with parliamentary traditions.

Mr. Sambamuth (Andhra) raised a point of order whether, under the rules, this motion could be passed.

It was explained that the notice of the motion could be waived by the A. I. C. C., if it so liked, and now that the motion had been discussed the house must be taken to have so waived the notice.

Dr. PARANJPYE spoke next. He was not, he said, frightened even by armed rebellion ; but, in politics, it was not worth while looking to too distant goals and ideals. With regard to electing representatives of outside political organisations to sit on the Congress Committees, usually the District Congress Committees formed themselves into a caucus and permitted no outsider to get elected. The Congress was a body for the demonstration of all views of all the bodies in the country. (A voice : Not for mere demonstration.)

Regarding the acceptance of offices, as against the instance of Col. Chaudhury having been superseded, he could give two instances in the Central Provinces and Punjab where Indians had been appointed. Ministers, he said, could have power in the transferred Departments equal even to the Governor's, if the elected representatives solidly backed them.

There was some more discussion at this stage regarding the admissibility of the motion.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar explained that the A.I.C.C. could waive the notice, but they were not at liberty to decide the question of calling a special Congress without giving the absent members an opportunity to express their views on the question

Mr. Mahomed Ali suggested that the Provincial Councils could be asked to communicate their views without calling another meeting of the A.I.C.C for the purpose.

Pandit Malaviya, at this stage, further pointed out they could now decide to call a special meeting of the A.I.C.C. by means of a requisition signed by thirty members, but he would withdraw the motion with the permission of the House.

Moulana Shaukat Ali now made a speech in which he alleged that the Calcutta riots were the result of the Hindu Sangathan. Council entry, he said, was "haram" to him.

Pandit Malaviya objected to the word "haram", to which Moulana Shaukat Ali retorted with considerable heat that he did not refer to the Pandit.

Mr. B. S. Kamat at this time wanted to know what would happen to the concrete proposals made by Sir Moropant.

Pandit NEHRU thereupon replied in an impressive speech to Sir Moropant's proposals. Pandit Malaviya's motion, he said, was out of order as those present had no right to waive the notice of the motion on behalf of those absent. The motion, he continued, was intended only to serve as an occasion for a full and free discussion of the differences between the Congress and the National Party. Coming to Sir Moropant's proposals he thought that Sir Moropant was not pinning himself down to a Special Congress. Sir Moropant desired, as far as the Pandit understood him, only for still more private discussions. He thought it would not be reasonable to expect the Congress to change its very foundation before

they could join it. The proper way for them would be to come into the Congress first and then discuss and convince them or be convinced. Regarding the question of direct representations of political associations on the Congress Committee, he said that this again would mean going back on Congress principles. He would, therefore, again appeal to the National Party section to come within the Congress. From the informal conversations with them he knew that they desired only private discussions. A special session of the Congress would, therefore, not serve their purpose. He concluded : " We came as friends. Let us part as friends."

Mr. SEN GUPTA then contradicted Moulana Shaukat Ali's statement that he threw out challenge in his Patna speech to Pandit Malaviya regarding the elections in Bengal. He would contradict the suggestion that the Pandit had anything, even remotely, to do with the riots. But they all know that but for the lead given by Sir Abdur Rahim from Aligarh onwards there would have been no riots. Mr. Sen Gupta declared that he was not for any communal organisation, whether Hindu or Mussalman.

Mr. D. C. DALVI, speaking next, referred to the condition that the National Party group should be prepared to abide by the decision before the special session could be called. He instanced the Locarno Pact and said that he and his friends came in a Locarno spirit and did not expect to be called upon in the first instance to join the Congress. They were not prepared to take that step first, but if the Special Congress was called they would hold a meeting of their working committee at the same time and carry on further negotiations.

Sir Moropant expressed thankfulness for the kindness and courtesy extended to his section.

Pandit Malaviya, himself, finally withdrew his proposition. " Zero is the practical result of the meeting " Pandit Malaviya was heard to say at the conclusion of the proceedings.

Mrs. Naidu, winding up, differed from Pandit Malaviya in his expressed view of the result of the meeting. She was certain that this meeting should not be judged by immediate results. The small seed of understanding with Sir Moropant and others of the National Party group would, she was confident, grow up into the reunion of all parties under the Congress banner.

The meeting then terminated.

The Cause of the Break-down.

Before the A.I.C.C. met, the Working Committee meeting was being held at the Satyagrahashram on the 4th May at 10 A.M. behind closed doors. It carried on protracted deliberations lasting for over four hours. While the Committee was proceeding, the following correspondence passed between the President, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Pandit Motilal Nehru on the one hand and the Responsive Co-operationists on the other. The latter rejected the new terms offered by Pandit Motilal and also refused to attend

the meeting of the A.I.C.C. held that evening. They took a very firm attitude and sent word to the Congress President, Mrs. Naidu, that they were not prepared to submit to any modification of the Sabarmati Pact. In fact, they described the new proposals of Pt. Nehru as a travesty of the Sabarmati Pact and were not prepared to offer any counter-proposal beyond the original Pact. Following is the text of the letter which Mr. Jayakar and his colleagues wrote to Mrs. Naidu on the morning of 4th May.

To Mrs. Naidu, President, Working Committee, Indian National Congress.

DEAR MADAM,

In response to your kind invitation to attend the meeting of the Working Committee this morning at 9, we arrived here and were about to attend the meeting, when we received at the hands of Sjt. Raja Rao, Assistant Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee a draft of a proposed resolution, purporting to be sent by Pandit Motilalji for our consideration on the ground that the wording of the Sabarmati Pact was cryptic and required amplification. We have carefully considered the draft which we regard as a travesty of the pact and a complete repudiation of the same. We think that the draft furnishes no common ground on which we could profitably meet and discuss. Under these circumstances we are of opinion that no useful purpose will be served by our attending the Working Committee's meeting this morning and we have therefore decided not to attend the same. We feel that we need not have been dragged all the way to Ahmedabad from our distant homes, to be made sport of in the manner the draft proposes to do.

Yours truly,
 (Signed) M. R. JAYAKAR.
 " N. C. KELKAR.
 " B. S. MOONJE.
 " M. S. ANEY.
 " D. V. GOKHALE.
 " G. A. OGALE.

P.S.—We send herewith for your information a copy of the resolution which our party unanimously adopted yesterday by way of ratifying the terms of the Pact, as required by the last clause thereof.

IN REPLY MRS. NAIDU WROTE:—

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have just received your letter. The draft sent you by Pandit Motilal is only for discussion at the Working Committee. Your presence is most necessary for this discussion, and I am requesting you earnestly to attend the Working Committee that is now sitting, to press your own points and objections to enable us to arrive at some final settlement, if possible.

Yours sincerely,
 (Signed) SAROJINI NAIDU.

IN REPLY THE RESPONSIVISTS WROTE:—

DEAR MADAM,

We are in receipt of your letter. It does not make it clear whether yourself and Pandit Motilalji, the two principal parties to the pact, are going to stand by it, in its passage through the Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. We came here to support you in doing so in the fullest expectation that you two would adhere to the pact as it stands and which had your fullest approval. Unless you propose to do so, there is no meaning in our attending the joint deliberations of the Working Committee or even the A. I. C. C. A clear reply to this enquiry will clear up the situation.

You will permit us to observe that it is futile to put forward, even as a basis of discussion, a draft which completely repudiates the pact. It is needless to add that the pact represented the maximum basis of agreement between the two sides. We respect it

as such and are prepared to stand by it, provided you do the same. This will save unnecessary waste of time, involved in examining positions which were abandoned after scrutiny by one or the other of the two sides, before the pact was arrived at.

Awaiting your reply,

We are, yours truly,

(Signed) M. R. JAYAKAR,

for Self and Colleagues.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPLY :—

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I am really sorry and surprised that you and your friends should consider that either Pandit Motilal Nehru or I should wish to get out of the Pact. The whole purpose of calling the A. I. C. C. was for the purpose of confirming the Pact. Certain conditions were agreed to by both the wings of the Swaraj Party after frank discussion in the friendliest spirit. I put my signature to the Pact purely formally as President of the Congress at your request. The real Pact was between the leaders of the Swaraj Party proper and the leaders of the Responsive Co-operationist Party. The draft submitted is for discussion and I think it your duty as parties to the Pact to attend the Working Committee. We have been waiting since 10 A.M. Please meet us at the Circuit House before 5 p.m. today and let us discuss the pact with the Working Committee. I certainly will stand by the Pact as I understand and accept it, an honourable undertaking between the two wings of the Swaraj Party consistent with the principles and the ideas of the Congress.

Yours truly,

(Sd.) SAROJINI NAIDU.

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU'S LETTER TO THE RESPONSIVISTS :—

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has shown me your letter. I am sorry you are insisting upon conditions before meeting the members of the Working Committee in a friendly conversation on the pact and the questions which have arisen since it was signed. I am of course prepared to stand by the pact as I understand it. But, as you are aware, there has been a difference of opinion among the signatories themselves as to what are the true implications of the language adopted. I certainly do not agree in the interpretation put upon it by Mr. Kelkar and in the action of the Press represented by the "Maharatta" and the "Kesari", nor even in the resolution passed by your party in Bombay yesterday. I refer you to my interview to the Press and my recent Allahabad speech for my interpretation of the pact. I think that the only reasonable way of dealing with the matter is for us to come together again and have another free and frank talk on the subject.

The draft resolution handed to you this morning was not intended merely to explain the pact but was settled in consultation with other prominent members of the Congress as a formula likely to be approved by the All-India Congress Committee. It is open to us to modify it after discussing it with you if you will give us an opportunity to do so.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) MOTILAL NEHRU.

The terms of the pact and the conditions required to be fulfilled before any response by the Government could be considered satisfactory were then considered by the Working Committee. Pandit Motilal Nehru informed the Committee that he had laid the following essentials of a satisfactory response before the Sabarmati Conference with the Responsivists on the 21st April, but that they were not incorporated in the Pact as it was understood that they would be issued as separate instructions to the members :—

- (1) "abolishing non-official nominations to the Councils and throwing open the seats of nominated non-official members to election by the general electorates :
- (2) "making Ministers fully responsible to the legislature, free from all control of the Governor or the Governor-in-Council in the administration of their respective departments :
- (3) allocating a fixed proportion of the revenues of the province for the development of nation-building departments, without imposing additional burdens on the people :
- (4) vesting in the Ministers full control of the services in the transferred departments :
- (5) introducing such other changes as may be required under the special circumstances of any particular province on representation being made by the Congress party in the legislature of that particular province."

The Committee was of opinion that in view of the difference of opinion that had arisen, the Pact as it stood with the material conditions omitted from it could not be accepted and the following draft resolution was adopted as representing the minimum response which the Working Committee would be prepared to put before the All-India Congress Committee for confirmation if the Responsivists agreed to amplify the Pact in accordance therewith :—

The Draft Resolution

"Having regard to the fact that doubts and differences have arisen as to the true interpretation of the agreement arrived at between Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Messrs. Lajpat Rai, M. S. Aney, M. R. Jayakar, N. C. Kelkar, B. S. Moonje, D. V. Gokhale, G. A. Ogle and Motilal Nehru at Sabarmati on the 21st April 1926,

"This meeting of the A. I. C. C. while fully agreeing with the principles, policy and programme laid down in resolution VII of the Cawnpore Congress and resolution II B of the A. I. C. C. passed at Delhi on the 6th and 7th March 1926 and fully believing that dyarchy in any form or shape is wholly unworkable in the best of conditions, is of opinion that with a view to remove all doubts and differences and to put the true issue before the country it is expedient to state clearly what shall constitute the "satisfactory response" referred to in the said resolution.

"It is therefore hereby resolved :

I. That the acceptance by the Government of the principle underlying the resolution passed by the Assembly on the 18th February 1924 shall constitute a satisfactory response by the Government to the National Demand for full Responsible Government and the immediate adoption by the Government of the various steps mentioned in the resolution of the Assembly passed on the 8th September 1925 shall for the present be taken to be a sufficient compliance with the said principle.

II. That if responsible Government in the fullest sense is guaranteed by the Government to come automatically in the near future by the adoption of other steps than those mentioned in the resolution of the Assembly passed on the 8th September 1925 and if in the meantime, substantially full responsible Government in the Provinces is granted the response so made by the Government shall be considered sufficient in the provinces for the purpose of accepting offices of Ministers and considering the Provincial budgets on the merits ;

Provided that no such response shall be considered adequate unless it includes :—

(a) The release or trial according to law of all political prisoners who are at present detained without being convicted by duly constituted Courts ;

(b) The repeal of all repressive laws ;

(c) The removal of all disqualifications now imposed on persons who have served the sentences passed on their conviction of any offences, from standing for election to all elected bodies in the country ; and

(d) The abolition of non-official nominations to membership of Councils and throwing open the seats of nominated non-official members to election by the electorates.

III. That the adequacy of any such action by the Government in any Province as is referred to in Resolution II shall on the recommendation of the Congress members of the Legislative Council of that province be decided by the Working Committee".

It was also agreed by the Committee that in the event of the Responsivists not consenting to the foregoing resolution the same be, if necessary, put forward as an independent resolution after substituting the words—

"it is expedient to confirm and re-state the actual position taken up by the Leader of the Swaraj Party at the negotiations and in entering into the said agreement"

for the words :

"it is expedient to state clearly what shall constitute the satisfactory response referred to in the said resolution."

Final Breakdown

The Working Committee adjourned at 3-30 P.M. Soon after Mr. Jayakar and his colleagues waited upon Pundit Motilal and Mrs. Naidu at 5 P.M. and as the latter had to attend a municipal function, waited for their return and discussed matters with them from 6-30 P.M. What transpired in these discussions is evident from the letter addressed by Mr. Jayakar and his colleagues to the President. The following is the text of the letter :—

DEAR MADAM,

With reference to the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, which has been convened this evening to ratify the Sabarmati Pact arrived at between the leaders of the Swarajya Party and the Responsive Co-operation Party, we beg to state that by the invitation of Mrs. Naidu and Pandit Motilal Nehru, we met them and some of the members of the Congress Working Committee at the Circuit House this evening; and in the course of the discussion which took place there, Pandit Motilal Nehru, one of the principal signatories to the Pact, was not willing to move it for ratification at this evening's meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. He also added that as far as he was concerned, the Pact was abandoned. Under the circumstances, as the Pact no longer exists, we are of opinion that no useful purpose will be served by our attending the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, to which we have been invited. We have thought it desirable to put these facts on record, in order that there may be no misunderstanding about our absence at this evening's meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.

Yours truly,

M. B. Jayakar,
N. C. Kelkar,
Monjee,

Aney,
Gokhale,
Ogale.

Nine other members of the All-India Congress Committee, namely, Messrs. Velkar, Gulabchand Hirachand, N. S. Marathay, P. K. Shiralkar, D. R. Tango, R. M. Deshmukh, N. R. Bamaipgaker, N. S. Paranjpye and N. V. Gadgil also appended the following foot-note to the above letter :—

"We, the above members of the All-India Congress Committee find, ourselves in complete agreement with the above view and we are not therefore attending the said meeting of the All-India Congress Committee for reasons stated in the foregoing letters."

The Responsivists' View.

The Leaders of the Responsive Co-operation Party expressed their dissent emphatically from the version of the break-down of negotiations given to the A.I.C.C. by Mrs. Naidu and Pt. Nehru. Soon after their return to Bombay they held a public meeting on the 6TH MAY under the presidency of Mr. N. C. Kelkar and expressed their views of the abandonment of

the Sabarmati Pact. In opening the proceedings Mr. Kelkar maintained the Swarajists had come predetermined at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee to drop the Pact for the ratification of which the meeting was ostensibly called. He characterised Pandit Motilal's statement that the Pact had to be scrapped owing to different interpretations as a frivolous and fictitious excuse. According to Mr. Kelkar, Pandit Motilal Nehru had agreed to the Pact under the feeling that the absence of it might endanger the Swarajist prospects at the polls, but meeting with opposition in his own circles had most unceremoniously backed out of the pact at the eleventh hour.

Referring to the terms of the pact Mr. Kelkar said he did not make any secret of his views of working the reforms when the Pact was concluded. Pandit Nehru knew what he was signing. The Pact distinctly provided that as far as the provinces were concerned the adequacy of response should be determined by power, initiative and responsibility being secured to the ministers. The language of the Pact left no doubt that as far as the provinces were concerned, acceptances of offices did not in any way depend on the response to a Round Table Conference or any other Assembly demand as Pandit Nehru tried to make it appear now.

In conclusion Mr. Kelkar charged Pandit Motilal with wilful backsliding and gross betrayal. Mr. Kelkar was of opinion that common decency required of Pandit Nehru that he should have moved the acceptance of the Pact by the All-India Congress Committee even though the majority had refused to ratify it. Dr. Moonje, Mr. D. V. Gokhale, Mr. M. S. Aney, Dr. M. B. Velkar, Mr. L. B. Bhopatkar and Mr. N. S. Paranjpye who also addressed the meeting spoke in the same strain and said that Pandit Motilal was guilty of a grave breach of trust.

Another meeting of the Party was held next day, the 7TH MAY at Sirdar-Griha Bombay. Mr. M. R. Jayakar, president of the party, was in the chair. The meeting was well-attended. Amongst those present were Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Mr. Aney, Dr. Moonje, Messrs. L. B. Bhopatkar, D. V. Gokhale, Dr. M. B. Velkar, Dr. Besant, Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Mr. Kanji Dwarkadas, P. K. Telang and others.

After discussion the meeting adopted the following resolutions unanimously :—

The Liberal—Responsivist Pact.

This meeting of the Responsive Co-operation Party, having read the report of the proceedings of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held at Ahmedabad on 4th and 5th May, and the correspondence which passed between the leaders of the Party and the President of the Indian National Congress and the leader of the Swaraj Party, approves of the action of the leaders of this party in firmly adhering to the terms of the Pact and in declining to withdraw from the same.

Now that the Pact has been broken, this meeting, hereby, calls on the leaders and members of this party to take up in earnest, the work of carrying on propaganda on the lines laid down in the programme adopted at Akola, and with a view to the same, to take all such steps as may be necessary in consultation or collaboration with all other parties or organisations in the country whose aims and ideals may be in consonance with our own.

The Responsive Co-operation Party expresses its sympathy with the aims and objects of the Indian National Party so far as they are, or may hereafter be, in agreement with the aims and objects of the Responsive Co-operation Party as expressed in the manifesto passed and issued at Akola.

As an indication of such sympathy, and its desire to work in co-operation with the Indian National Party, this party agrees that its members may join the Indian National Party, and it expects that the Indian National Party will respond in the same spirit of confidence and harmony, and agree to do likewise.

In the provinces in which the Responsive Co-operation Party has been already formally established, the same shall be consolidated and developed with the same conditions as to membership as obtain at present.

In the Provinces in which a branch of the Responsive Co-operation Party has not been established, the people in sympathy with the aims and objects of the Responsive Co-operation Party may form a branch of this party or the Indian National Party according to the preference of those people.

In the Congress Provinces of Bombay City, Maharashtra, C. P. and Berar, the Executive of the Responsive Co-operation Party will have perfect freedom to make suitable arrangements in consultation with the Executive of the Indian National Party, with a view to work being carried on in the Provinces.

In the Provinces in which the Indian National Party alone will be formed, that party will be exclusively responsible for all matters relating to the elections. In the Provinces other than Bombay, Maharashtra, C. P. and Berar, in event of both the parties being formed, the question of the measure of consultation and co-operation between them in the matter of the work to be carried on in the Provinces shall be left to the Executive Committees of the two parties.

The Nationalist Party's Statement

The members of the Indian National Party, who attended the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in response to the official invitation of Mrs. Naidu, President of the Congress, had, on their return to Bombay on the 6th May, issued the following statement to the Press :—

The circumstances under which we, the undersigned members of the Indian National party, went to Ahmedabad are now well-known. We went there because Mrs. Naidu desired that members of our party should attend the All-India Congress Committee as she hoped and expected that if the Sabarmati pact between the Swarajists and the Responsive Co-operators was ratified the possibility of all parties being united within the Congress may be explored. With that view she had asked us to submit concrete proposals. As, however, the pact was not ratified there was no room left for considering the question of larger unity. But as we were present at the All-India Congress Committee meeting, we made our position clear by stating the main obstacles in the way of our party and those who think with it joining the Congress and suggesting directions in which the Congress could take action to remove those obstacles.

(1) The Congress Creed.—Under the present Congress creed mass civil disobedience and general non-payment of taxes is permissible and at Cawnpore the Congress resolved that steps should be taken to prepare the country for such action. The Indian National party, on the other hand, has expressly excluded mass civil disobedience and general non-payment taxes from the means to be adopted for the attainment of Swaraj. We cannot go beyond the policy and programme of our party in this behalf. If it is desired to bring us within the Congress, mass civil disobedience and general non-payment of taxes should be eliminated from the objective of the Congress, more especially when the Congressmen themselves feel and recognise that these methods are not practicable at present.

(2) Working the Reforms.—The policy and programme of the Indian National party lay down that the constitution as embodied in the Government of India Act of 1919, though inadequate and unsatisfactory, should be utilised to the fullest extent, including acceptance of office. The position taken up by the Congress and the Swaraj party, which not only dominates it but officially represents it in the legislatures, is that unless the Government responds satisfactorily to the Swarajist demands to scrap the present constitution and call a Round Table Conference in order to evolve a new one, the Congress policy through the Swaraj party in the Legislatures is to be one of uniform, consistent and continuous obstruction. Unless, therefore, the Congress abandons this policy of indiscriminate obstruction, the Indian National Party cannot come within the Congress.

(3) Congress Constitution.—If the desire to bring all political parties within the Congress is genuine, the rules as regards representation in the Congress and its several

Committees should be so modified as to give proper representation to all the political parties therein. This can be accomplished by recognising the various party organisations for the election of delegates to the Congress. Only in this way can the Congress be made thoroughly representative of all shades of political opinion in the country, instead of being a caucus of one political party.

(4) Rule of Khaddar.—It is at present compulsory on all persons to wear Khaddar at the meetings of the Congress and other Congress functions. While we are as much in favour of Swadeshi as the Congressmen themselves, we have conscientious objection to any compulsion as regards the manner in which anybody should clothe himself. This compulsion should be removed.

We placed these views before the All-India Congress Committee and, although its members patiently followed what we said, we felt that there was really no desire to make any move in the direction of making it possible to the members of the Indian National Party to join the Congress. The attitude taken up was that if we wanted we could join the Congress under the existing conditions and then try to convert it to our views by persuading the majority to make the necessary alterations in the Congress policy and programme, but that if we failed in doing so we must abide by the decision of the majority. We regret this result, more especially, as we are convinced that Mrs. Naidu in extending her invitation had a genuine desire to bring about a larger unity within the Congress in the higher interest of the country.

(Sir.) M. V. Joshi,
(Dr.) R. P. Paranjpye,
H. S. Kamat,
D. G. Dalvi,

N. M. Joshi,
M. C. Chagla,
V. K. Rajwade,

Pt Motilal Nehru's Statement.

On the 7th May, in the evening, Pandit Motilal Nehru, addressing a largely attended public meeting in Bombay with Mrs. Naidu in the chair, gave "a plain and unvarnished statement of the facts that led up to the final collapse of the Sabarmati Pact":—

At the time of the All-Parties' Conference in Bombay, from which the most dominant party, namely, the Swaraj or the Congress Party, was studiously excluded, the Pandit said he wrote to Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, who with Mrs. Naidu was in Bombay, asking him to see the Responsivists and speak to them regarding the differences between them and the Swarajists with a view to arriving at an agreement. Even in that letter, the Pandit said he had referred to the previous note to Mr. Aney in which he had stated: "You will observe that there is a vast difference between the implications of these two positions. Holding the view that I do, I have no business to remain in the Councils a day longer if the party decides to accept office. According to you, however, non-acceptance of offices only impairs the usefulness of the Councils to a certain extent; but does not make it utterly futile. That being the case, is it not in the interest of the country for us all to work together, though in a somewhat restricted sphere, rather than waste our time and energy in fighting each other, merely with the intention of extension of that sphere? The answer is obvious." This, he said, would show the attitude of mind with which he approached the question.

After his conversation with the Responsivists, Pt. Motilal said Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar told him that there was a general desire for a Conference. The Pandit fixed the 20th April for the Conference. While coming to the Conference, he formed a draft resolution which the All-India Congress Committee should adopt defining the character of the response which would be acceptable. Some of the conditions that he laid down in it for adequate response in the provinces, were the release unconditionally of political prisoners, the abolition of non-official nominations to the Councils, and the throwing open of these seats to election, the transfer of the Revenue Department to the Legislature and the giving of full responsibility to Ministers, etc. In fact he was asking for full responsible Government in the provinces.

On the morning of the 20th April he had a talk with Mr. Jayakar, and must, as far as his memory could be trusted, have placed all these issues, as he had drafted them, before Mr. Jayakar. Mahatma Gandhi also read through the draft in the afternoon, and expressed complete approval of it.

The first question that came up at the meeting, in the presence of Mahatma Gandhi, was put by the Mahatma himself, namely, that it should be quite clear there was no question of taking offices unless there was a satisfactory response on the part of the Government. After further discussion it was decided that three drafts should be prepared—one by Gandhiji, another by Mr. Jayakar and the third by himself. Meeting again next morning he could not accept Mr. Jayakar's draft, and both of them did not accept Mahatmaji's. The speaker's own draft remained. It was agreed previously that the draft was not to be burdened with matters on which there was no disagreement, and that the conditions should be sent to the provinces as secret conditions of testing the response. These conditions were, as he had previously drafted. He had, he said, explained the implications of the Pact in his interview, and the correspondence which had been published in the press bore out his version. If further proof was needed, Mrs. Naidu in her Allahabad speech had declared that her impression was that the Pact did not swerve an inch from the Cawnpore resolution. He would leave it to the Tribunal or the Public to judge who was responsible for ending the Pact. He had, as a result of the break-down, stiffness in his attitude towards acceptance of office. Not even elected offices should in his opinion be accepted. (A voice: Let Mr. Patel resign.)

Mr. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, in an eloquent and closely reasoned speech, which carried conviction to the minds of the listeners and which was repeatedly applauded, said that before the meeting of the A. I. C. C. was held the Responsivists had announced that they would not alter the draft by a tittle. They were thrice invited at Ahmedabad to come and discuss with the Swarajists, but they would not, as they were anxious for spoils. Mahatma Gandhi was anxious for conciliation, but the Responsivists were only out for tactics.

Mr. Iyengar said acceptance of office meant acceptance of Diarchy, and it was nothing less than a humiliation and surrender to the foreign bureaucracy. He had full faith in the people of Maharashtra, and he hoped they would be the vanguard of the fight at the next election. They were all on the eve of success, and he urged them not to lose the reward of their fight by fighting among themselves. He did not want unity by acceptance of Diarchy, though it was easier to negotiate with the National Party than with the Responsivists. Acceptance of office meant more administrative expenses and less liberty and great disservice to the country. The Reforms were not workable. They should therefore be worked by the worst men and not by their best men. Besides, it would not bring about harmonious relations between the Hindus and the Mahomedans as acceptance of office only was the cause of all the communal troubles and not orthodox piety.

There should be, he said, only two parties in the country, namely the Government and the Congress Party. The Swaraj Party had helped the country to repeal the Excise duty, and got a bounty for Messrs. Tata & Co., and he urged the citizens of Bombay to rise to the occasion at the next election and help the Swarajists to fight their battle of freedom.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTHI then said it was a tragedy too deep for tears that they should be compelled by their own countrymen to fight them before they fought the bureaucracy. There was no country in the world where such a sad spectacle could be seen. In October next there would be a general election, and he hoped the voters who had heard Pandit Nehru would not only acquit him but would reward him by voting for the Swarajists only.

The Responsivists were referring to the late Lokamanya Tilak but whenever they referred to that great departed leader they took his name in vain. It was the Lokamanya who did not accept the Reforms at the Amritsar Congress and Mahatma Gandhi, with great difficulty, had to persuade him to accept doles for the time being, while the Responsivists by accepting office and diarchy were taking in vain the revered name of the late Lokamanya who had opposed the Reforms as unworkable. The Responsivists had thrown themselves on the political market of India and it was for the voters to decide whether they were purchasable articles. Of late, they were trying to throw their lots with the Nationalist Party, but he doubted their loyalty to that party, since they had betrayed the Congress. He was pleased to see some of their Liberal friends at Sabarmati, and was hopeful that they would some day join the Congress and fight for the country. The Congress would welcome any man and woman provided they accepted the guidance of the majority and when they got a majority, the others would follow them. Lokamanya, though he remained for several years out of the Congress, did not form any party against the Congress. The speaker urged all Indians for the sake of the good of the country to join the Congress and form only one party under the banner of that old political body.

Mr. Jayakar's Statement

Mr. M. R. Jayakar, in the course of a statement to the press on the breakdown of the Sabarmati Pact, said :—

When the leaders met at Sabarmati on 20th April, discussion proceeded on three points (1) whether there was to be a response from the Government before offices could be accepted in the provinces; (2) what was to be its nature; and (3) who was to be the judge of the response?

As discussion proceeded, at one stage, Panditji said to my party: "Surely, as self-respecting men, you do not want to accept offices unless you feel some good will come out of them?" I replied "Yes, Panditji, I am quite agreeable to this test, and if you will kindly put it in proper language, we can arrive at a solution."

To this, both the parties agreed on the clear understanding, however, that the language should be so worded as not to lay down rigid conditions and that whatever agreement they ultimately reached, should be worded as to fit in an amendment or rider to clause 4 (a) and (b) of the All-India Congress Committee resolution of 6th and 7th March.

Meeting again next day, three drafts, one by Gandhiji, the second by me and third by Pandit Nehru were considered. The first two were rejected and Panditji's draft adopted as the basis for discussion. According to this draft, the Government's response was to be considered sufficient if the power, responsibility and initiative necessary for the effective discharge of the Ministers' duties were secured to them by (1) abolishing non-official nominations, etc., (2) making Ministers fully responsible to the legislature and freeing them from the control of the Governor, etc., (3) allocating a fixed proportion of revenue, etc., (4) vesting in the Ministers full control over the services in the Transferred departments and (5) introducing such other changes as may be required under the special circumstances of any province, etc. It would be clear from this draft, that the response which Panditji had in view was to be in the provinces and was to be tested by efficiency of power, responsibility and initiative for the effective discharge of their duties by Ministers. The response had no reference, whatsoever, to the two demands of the Legislative Assembly.

The Responsivists pointed out that the five conditions enumerated in the draft should be deleted, firstly because they would furnish a handle to the Government to defeat our object, and secondly because the conditions of the different provinces varied materially. Ultimately, the Pandit agreed to drop them, and also to introduce the words 'in the provinces' after the words 'considered satisfactory' in order to make the draft clearer.

The second point discussed and decided was that Panditji and myself should constitute the final determining authority, with Mahatma Gandhi as Umpire in the event of differences between them. The last point was omitted out of regard for Mahatmajiji's wishes.

Thereafter, said Mr. Jayakar, while the Responsivists had started from their homes to attend the Working Committee meeting, a draft was put in their hands which, in their view, introduced drastic alterations amounting to complete negation of the Pact, especially on two fundamental principles (1) that the response material for accepting offices in the provinces was to be the response in the provinces and not to the Assembly's demand (2) that offices were to be accepted or, in other words, dyarchy worked under the present Constitution, subject to the satisfactory conditions indicated in the Pact. This, Mr. Jayakar declared, was a complete withdrawal of the position taken in the Pact by Pandit Motilal. The Responsivists were nevertheless prepared to attend the meetings, provided Pandit Motilal and Mrs. Naidu at least would adhere to the terms of the Pact. If they did not, the Responsivists felt certain, that the Pact would not be adhered to and that it was futile to continue their efforts. Ultimately, they did see Pandit Nehru and Mrs. Naidu, but it became clear that the Pandit was not prepared to adhere to the Pact.

Mr. Jayakar said that Responsivists did not visit Mr. Gandhi, because they thought it would be wrong except on his own invitation to take up his time and cause him pain. If this was discourtesy, they were guilty. Mr. Jayakar concluded by saying that rival interpretations were not sufficient grounds for abandoning the Pact. The Pact was clear and perfectly workable, and rival interpretations were capable of being adjusted. "I do not wish to blame the Pandit knowing as I do his difficulties. My grievance is that he had evaded the Pact on wrong grounds and with a precipitancy which was not justified by the circumstances."

The All-India Swaraj Party

The Responsivists.

The Cawnpur Congress Session was dissolved on the 28th December 1925 and the next Session of the Congress was decided to be held in Assam. Mr. Jayakar, the Leader of the Responsivists, who fought so hard in the Congress for the working of the present constitution and the acceptance of offices under it, left the same day for Bombay to open an anti-Congress campaign. Before leaving he issued a statement over the signatures of Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Dr. Moonjee and himself regarding their future Programme. The statement runs :—

THE RESPONSIVISTS' PROGRAMME.

"We feel that the resolution of the General Council of the Swarajya Party which was passed on the 25th December at Cawnpore laying down certain principles and the course of action to be followed by members of the Swarajya Party is unacceptable to us on various grounds which it is unnecessary to mention in this statement. We further feel that, consistently with our views, we are unable to act in accordance with the same. We therefore propose to carry on propaganda against that resolution and on the lines of responsive co-operation, and in order to obtain complete freedom of action for that purpose and the widest basis for our operations, we are tendering our resignations of our seats in the Legislatures which we competed for on the Swarajist ticket. Though it may not be strictly necessary to do so for the purpose of our intended propaganda, we wish to set ourselves totally free from all situations which are likely to be regarded by our electors, even in the remotest manner, in the light of commitments. We take this opportunity of thanking our electors for their support and confidence throughout the period we occupied our seats in the Legislatures."

Subsequently the members of the right wing of the Swaraj Party of the Bombay Legislative Council met in Bombay on the 16th and 17th January 1926 to decide as to whether they should follow their leader, Mr. Jayakar and his colleagues, Messrs. Kelkar, Aney and Moonjee and resign from the Council. The meeting was held on both the days and the main question before the meeting was whether the members should resign their offices immediately. After a good deal of discussion it was resolved that the Party should reiterate its faith in the policy of responsive co-operation, and should extend to Messrs. Jayakar and Kelkar and Dr. Moonjee support in their propaganda.

It was also decided to pursue in the Bombay Council a policy of responsive co-operation, there being no question of acceptance of office during the life-time of the present Council. It was further held that mere reiteration of the Party's convictions and declaration of future intentions did not call for immediate action in the direction of resigning from the Bombay Council, on account of differences between the Party and the official Swarajist programme. Resolutions were also passed recording appreciation of Mr. Jayakar's services to the Party and requesting him and his colleagues who resigned to contest the by-elections, and expressing full confidence in any decision they might arrive at regarding the line of action that would best serve the cause of responsive co-operation.

Some Members of the Swaraj Party in the Bombay Council, who some months back made representation to the Executive Council of the Swaraj

THE ALL-INDIA SWARAJ PARTY

Party about responsive co-operation and the necessity for capturing all offices of responsibility, power, and initiative, issued the following statement practically on the lines of the resolutions of the meeting as given above.

Text of the Statement

"We, the undersigned members of the Bombay Legislative Council Swaraj Party, after very careful consideration of the whole question, are of opinion that the position we took in the representation which we submitted to the Executive Council of the Swaraj Party of their Nagpur meeting in November last, is the correct one. We think that the policy of Responsive Co-operation and that of capturing all offices of responsibility, power and initiative is a proper and necessary development of the policy and method which we have followed during the last two years in the Bombay Legislative Council and which, in our opinion, the Swaraj Party has followed in the Legislative Assembly during the same period. There is, of course, no question of taking any office during the tenure of the present Council, but we propose during the rest of the term of the present Council to follow and adhere to the same policy of Responsive Co-operation as we have followed so long. We do not think that there is any necessity for us on that account to resign our seat in the Council for the present, but we shall await subsequent developments.

"We heartily approve of the action of our leader, Mr. Jayakar, in having unhesitatingly resigned his seat in the Council in vindication of his views and for the purpose of obtaining freedom to carry on, in an unfettered manner, his propaganda in favour of Responsive Co-operation, and we hereby resolve to give him and to his colleagues, Messrs. Kelkar, Aney and Dr. Moonjee all help we can to popularise the doctrine of Responsive Co-operation which we believe, to be the most suitable and effective programme to be pursued in the legislatures in order to consolidate all patriotic elements in the country, to furnish adequate opposition to Government and to protect the interest and welfare of our electorate.

"We take this opportunity to put on record our sense of appreciation and gratitude for the great services which Mr. Jayakar rendered to the Party as its leader during the last two years. We have by our resolution, passed this morning requested Mr. Jayakar as also Messrs. Kelkar, Aney and Dr. Moonji to contest their seats at the next bye-election on responsive co-operation ticket and we have no doubt that they will give their best consideration to our request and will act in a manner which in their opinion is best calculated to promote the cause of responsive co-operation.

"We sincerely trust that if Mr. Jayakar contests the bye-election he will be re-elected and that his services will be once more available to us in the Bombay Legislative Council."

(Sd.) M. B. Velkar; W. S. Mukandam; C. M. Septarshi; J. C. Swaminarayan M. B. Powar; P. C. Joshi; H. D. Saheba (with the note: "not in favour of responsive co-operation but in favour of capturing offices for obstruction. Subject to this I sign above"); D. N. Patil; M. K. Dixit; H. M. Mehta; H. H. Narielwalla; R. C. Soman; N. R. Ganjal; and L. B. Bhopatkar.

The Berar Responsivists

The Responsive Co-operators of Berar, however, acted in a different way than the members of that Party in Bombay. At a meeting of the Berar Swaraj Party held at Yeotmal on the 10th January they not only resigned from the Swaraj Party but also decided to resign their membership of the local Council, on the grounds:—

"Namely, (1) that the Swaraj Party, and, consequently the Cawnpore Congress, had deliberately set at naught the September resolution of the Legislative Assembly, which had given a definite and unambiguous expression to the National Demand, (2) that it has rendered impossible the hope of important political groups allowing themselves to rally round the flag of the Indian National Congress, (3) that it has rigidly defined the principle on which the ensuing triennial elections should be fought, and precluded every possibility of the electorate being consulted on issues involving their vital interests, and (4) the launching of the campaign of civil disobedience has been left as regards power of initiative, to the present All-India Congress Committee, which has a clear majority of those who are, on principle, proposed to Council entry and consequently to any success of the Council programme".

The Responsivists' Akola Conference

A Conference of Responsive Co-operators was held at Akola on the 14th and 15th February, Mr. R. Jayakar presiding, with the object of forming a party to pursue the policy of responsive co-operation within the legislatures. The Conference was open only to those who subscribed to the principle of carrying out the Reforms, unsatisfactory, disappointing and inadequate as they were, for all they were worth, including capture of places within the legislatures, of power, responsibility and initiative, and using these opportunities for the purpose of accelerating the grant of Responsible Government and for creating opportunities for the people of advancing their interests and strengthening their power of resistance to injustice and misrule. Though admission was very limited, attendance was large.

Mr. M. R. JAYAKAR, in the course of his address, pointed out how a compromise, which could easily have been agreed to, by leaving the question to be determined by a Committee to be appointed for the purpose and for framing a programme on the eve of the next general elections, was rejected at Cawnpore leaving no alternative to responsive co-operators, but to go their own way. Mr. Jayakar further stated that the best propaganda for Responsive Co-operators was done by the good work which the Swarajists in the Assembly were doing in judiciously using the Reforms and the powers thereunder, for advancing the cause of Swaraj. As instances which had occurred in that direction, he referred to Pundit Motilal being permitted by the party, to interview the Viceroy regarding the South African question and the President of the Assembly using his powers with great care and wisdom in advancing the utility of the Assembly, especially the power of adjourning the House, which he had lately exercised more than once, for the purpose of allowing members to think over questions without heat and passion. He advised the audience steadily to pursue the work in front of the new party, their path being beset with calumny and misunderstanding, on the one hand, and the unyielding attitude of the Government on the other.

Resolutions Passed.

The Conference then adopted the following resolutions :—

- (1) The name of the party shall be "The Responsive Co-operation Party."
- (2) Membership of the party shall be open to every person who is otherwise eligible and signifies acceptance of the manifesto of the party, and pays an annual minimum subscription of Re. 1.
- (3) The party leave the question, whether membership shall be confined to Congressmen only, to be determined by each Congress province, according to the conditions prevailing therein, with special reference to the desirability of making the party strong, popular and effective. But in Maharashtra, Berar and C. P. (Marathi), the membership shall be confined to Congressmen only.
- (4) Office bearers :—M. R. Jayakar, President, and Mr. J. Baptista, Vice-President, and Mr. D. V. Gokhale, General Secretary ; Dr. M. R. Cholkar and Messrs. B. G. Khaparde and L. B. Bhopatkar, Secretaries for C. P. (Marathi), Berar and Maharashtra respectively.
- (5) There shall be a Central Council consisting of the President, the Vice-President, the General Secretary, the above secretaries and five representatives to be elected by each provincial branch before the 1st April next.
- (6) The Central Council is authorised to frame rules and regulations for carrying on efficiently the work of the party in the different provinces and the whole of India, and to do all other things incidental thereto.

THE ALL-INDIA SWARAJ PARTY

- (7) The President of the party shall have all the powers of the Central Council until it is constituted.
- (8) The party will have branches in the different congress provinces.
- (9) This meeting urges the prominent leaders of the party to make a tour throughout the country for the propagation of the party's cause.

The Party's Manifesto.

The following is the party's manifesto :—

(1) We believe that a mass movement of resistance throughout the country is certainly one of the means of enforcing the will of the nation in political matters. But it is the ultimate remedy and we agree, with the Congress, that the country is not at present ready for any measure of this nature.

(2) We believe, however, that a organised individual or group resistance is feasible and may be resorted to as occasions may demand for a particular locality, for definite objects, and for particular occasions.

(3) We believe that the programme of bringing about constitutional deadlocks, by resorting to a policy of uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction, can be successful unless tried on a large scale and backed by some sanction behind the same.

(4) We believe that the best course, under the present circumstances, is that of responsive co-operation, which means working the Reforms, unsatisfactory, disappointing and inadequate as they are, for all they are worth, and using the same for accelerating the grant of full responsible Government, and for creating opportunities for the people for advancing their interests and strengthening their power and for resisting injustice and misrule.

(5) We however, hereby declare that our working of the Reforms does not imply, in any way, that we give up any position, or surrender any objection, or make any commitment, with regard to the grave defects and inadequacies of the present Government of India Act in general, including the Preamble or Dyarchy in particular.

(6) The policy of working the Reforms necessarily includes the capture of all places of power, responsibility and initiative which are open to election by, or otherwise responsible to, the party within the legislatures, subject to such conditions, with regard to the policy, programme and other kindred matters as may seem desirable to impose from time to time.

(7) Our political programme shall be generally on the lines laid down in the manifesto of the party which in 1920 was started under the name of the Congress Democratic Party, with such changes as may be required under the present circumstances; and, for the purpose of adopting such changes, a Committee is hereby appointed consisting of the following persons, with instructions to submit their report to the Central Council by the end of March in consultation with the leading members of the party all over the country :—Messrs. M. R. Jayakar, J. Baptista, N. C. Kelkar, M. S. Aney, B. S. Moonji and S. V. Kelkar.

A resolution was also adopted, as part of the manifesto, expressing disagreement from the present policy of the Congress and of the Swaraj Party, as being ineffective either to obstruct the machinery of the Government or to advance the interests of the people.

The Swarajists in the Assembly

In 1924 when the Swarajists were determined to capture the legislatures and to go into the citadels of the bureaucracy and challenge them with the national demand they found themselves not strong enough to do so. Nevertheless they were able to secure the assistance of other Nationalist friends who, though they did not approve of their methods or programmes, in furtherance of their decision in the Assembly, were quite willing to co-operate with them in putting forth their national demand. That demand was embodied in a resolution which was carried in the Assembly on the 18th February, 1924.

All Nationalists and Liberals agreed in passing that resolution by an overwhelming majority and presented it for acceptance to the Government. The resolution demanded that the country was entitled to Swaraj and that Government should take immediate steps to establish Swaraj in the country. They were quite prepared to sit down at a Round Table Conference to discuss the methods by which Swaraj might be established in this country.

When the demand was presented to Government, Labour Government was in power. The Government of India adopted dilatory tactics and fumbled. They appointed a committee of enquiry into the working of the existing reforms. The Committee met and submitted a majority report and a minority report. The minority was in fact the majority, because one of the members of the majority turned turtle.

The report of the minority was that the existing constitution was worthless and unworkable and could not be made workable by any changes introduced in the rules or by tinkering here and there. It was recommended that the constitution should be put on a permanent basis and that the fundamental principles thereof should be enacted by means of terms of reference to a Royal Commission or any other suitable agency. That recommendation was laid aside with contempt, a recommendation made by those who honestly tried to work the present reforms, whatever they might be. They found that far from reaching its object the existing constitution was producing harm and that the whole machinery should be overhauled.

The Government put forward before the Assembly in September 1925 a resolution asking them to approve the recommendations of the bureaucratic half of the Enquiry Committee. Those recommendations were to the effect that the reform scheme had not been given and must be given, a fair trial before it could be said to be a failure and no case was made out for making any alterations in the existing constitution, and that minor changes in rules with a view to make diarchy more workable than it was, might be introduced here and there. That resolution was debated upon and the representatives of the people again joined in putting forth the national demand. The national demand made in 1924 was reiterated. The resolution also stated that Government should forthwith accept certain fundamental principles of self-government for this country and on that basis they must induce Parliament to make a declaration that Indians ought to have self-government based on those fundamental principles of Swaraj. The Swarajists in the Assembly were very reasonable in their demand. They wanted to show the Government that they were not merely theorists but were prepared to put down their differences so long as they could be satisfied that Government were sincere and honest. They wanted to show that they had a right to go one step forward in the direction of real responsible government being established in the country. They even said that the British Government need not give up control of the army and navy at once, but might readjust the military organisation within ten years so as to leave the control of the same at the end of that period. That demand was again put before the Government and they made it clear that they were not going to accept it.

Before leaving the shores of India, His Excellency Lord Reading promised to appoint a Royal Commission provided the Swarajists gave up obstruction and co-operated with the Government. The Swarajist contention was that they had had enough of Royal Commissions and they did not

want one more to add to their burden. What was wanted by them was a pledge from His Majesty's Government, Parliament, to the effect that India would get Swaraj forthwith and that immediate steps would be taken for attaining that end. They were quite prepared to sit down and discuss, whether by a Royal Commission or by any other agency that might be constituted, the methods, plans, etc. But they would not accept any proposal which did not in anticipation guarantee those fundamental principles of the constitution for which they had plighted themselves in the resolution of 8th September, 1925. The Swarajists stuck to their guns. At the Cawnpore Congress they persuaded the No-Changers, who saw no good would come out of the Councils, to help them in their fight. And they agreed. The famous resolution of the Congress was passed, which made it clear as to what they should do in the forthcoming general elections and what programme they should have when the country returned them in overwhelming majority.

The main part of the resolution of the Congress was that the Swarajists in the Assembly should ask the Government to give their definite reply at the earliest possible moment to the demands that were made on the 8th September, and, if that reply was unsatisfactory or unreasonable or if no reply was made, the Congress called upon the Swarajists in the Assembly to walk out of the Assembly and to tell the Government that they would no longer be in the Assembly and take part in the affairs and get through legislative proposals. The All-India Congress Committee, which met at Delhi on the 6th and 7th March 1926, definitely decided that the reply of the Government as disclosed in the answers contained in the speech of Sir Alexander Muddiman in the Council of State, indicated a definite negation of their demand and that their time had arrived to walk out of the Assembly. (For subsequent events see p. 17.)

The Sabarmati Conference

After an exasperatingly long period of controversy and conflict the two sections of the Swarajist Party managed to come to an agreement between them to the great satisfaction of the country. We give below the proceedings of the Conference and the text of the agreement which was arrived at between them.

The Conference was convened at the instance of Pandit Matilal Nehru and was held at Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad, on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 20th and 21st April.

The following were present :—Mahatma Gandhi, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Messrs. Jayakar and Agey, Dr. Moonji, Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Ogale. A few other friends who were invited could not attend owing to other engagements.

A number of telegrams and letters were received containing individual opinions on matters likely to come under discussion with a view to settle the difference between the Swaraj Party and the Responsivists.

A long telegram was received from Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, which contained suggestions for bringing all Indian political parties on a common platform in a United Congress.

The Discussion lasted for two days in which both the parties entered in a frank and friendly spirit. The Discussion turned on the resolution of the

All-India Congress Committee passed at Delhi on March last, the resolution adopted by the Responsive Co-operation Party at Akola in February 'last, and the resolution adopted at the Session of the Indian National Party held in Bombay on 3rd and 4th instant.

The Conference adopted the following agreement as embodying its decision on the points specifically discussed :—

Text of the Agreement

"It is hereby agreed between the undersigned, subject to the confirmation of the All-India Congress Committee, that the response made by the Government shall, for purpose of Clauses (a) and (b) of the resolution II-B (4) of the All-India Congress Committee, dated 6th and 7th March 1926, be considered satisfactory in the provinces if the power, responsibility and initiative necessary for the effective discharge of their duties are secured to Ministers. A sufficiency of such power, responsibility and initiative in each province shall be decided, in the first instance, by the Congress members of the Legislative Council of that province, subject to confirmation by a Committee consisting of Pandit Motilal Nehru and Mr. M. B. Jayakar.

"It is further agreed that the said Committee will decide all disputes about selection of candidates in the Congress Provinces of Bombay, Maharashtra, Berar and C. P. Marathi.

"This agreement has been subscribed to by the undersigned, in their individual capacities, and it will be submitted for ratification to the Executive of the Swaraj and Responsive Co-operation Parties. It will be placed for ratification before the All-India Congress Committee at a meeting which is being convened on the 5th and 6th May next at Sabarmati.

"(Sd.) Sarojini Naidu, Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai, M. B. Jayakar, N. C. Kelkar, B. S. Moonji, M. S. Aney, D. V. Gokhale, G. A. Ogale".

General satisfaction was expressed by the leaders at the agreement reached, but the expectations that centred round this Conference were transferred to the meetings of the Working Committee of the All-India Congress Committee on 4th, 5th and 6th May.

Subsequently, on the eve of the A.I.C.C. meeting two very important meetings were held at Allahabad and Bombay under the guidance of Pt. Nehru and Mr. Jayakar respectively. The proceeding of both the meetings are given below :—

The Swarajist's Allahabad Meeting.

On the 26th April, at the Allahabad District Conference, Pt. Motilal Nehru moved a resolution calling upon the public to make the programme of the Cawnpur Congress a success.

In the course of his speech, he referred to the compromise effected at Sabarmati, and repudiated the suggestion that it permitted acceptance of office under the existing circumstances. It was an interesting feature of the controversy raised on that compromise, that the friends of each party blamed it for having surrendered its principles to the other party. He thought that was the surest index of the soundness of the arrangement.

He explained the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee passed in Delhi at length, and pointed out that the Sabarmati Compromise only discovered a formula for the working of that resolution in practice. Congressmen were to refuse to accept office only during such time as the Government made no satisfactory response. The resolution was silent as to what was to be considered as a satisfactory response by the Congress. The Sabarmati arrangement supplied the omission, and inflicted the nature of the test which every response made by the Government must stand, before it could be considered satisfactory for the purpose of permitting Congressmen to take office. It would be satisfactory, only if it secured to the Ministers the power, responsibility and initiative

necessary for the effective discharge of their duties, which, the Congress maintained, they did not possess under the present rule.

There was no question of taking office unless and until the Government relaxed its rigid attitude and made a substantial advance of such a nature as would satisfy this test. It was not considered necessary to enter into farther details, and indicate the directions in which the required advance was to be made. It could not be doubted that, whilst there were certain general principles which would apply to the Provinces, there were also the special circumstances of each Province to be taken into consideration. It was not for an informal conference to get into these principles which could easily be formulated, once the general formula was adopted. It was understood that special instructions should be issued, later on, in that behalf, by the Congress or such other authority as it may appoint.

By way of illustration and speaking for himself only, he said that it would be difficult for the Government to satisfy him of the sufficiency of any response unless it satisfied three important conditions. The first was that the Ministers should be made fully responsible to the Legislature, free from all control of the Governor or the Governor-in-Council in the administration of their respective departments. The second was that an adequate proportion of the revenues of each Province should be allocated for the development of the Nation-Building Departments, without imposing additional burdens on the people. The third was that the Ministers should be given full control of the Services in the Transferred Departments. When these general conditions were satisfied, and not until then, he would think of going into the special circumstances of such a province, to see if the response made also removed some outstanding grievance or disability from which it was suffering. To illustrate the nature of such an outstanding grievance or desirability he would take the case of Bengal. He would accept no response, however, liberal, as sufficient for that province, unless the Bengal political prisoners and detainees, who were detained in the various jails without trial, were unconditionally released or tried according to law and the Criminal Law amended so as to make lawless action of this kind impossible in future. He believed that all this could be done without any amendment of the Government of India Act, but would not bind himself down to such changes only as came within the Act. Those were, of course, his own views, but might safely be taken to be the views of the whole Congress, for it was for these very things that the Congress had been fighting all these years.

He warned the voters against being misled by the election cries of the parties outside the Congress into the belief that the signatories to the Compromise had gone back on the Congress resolution. They stood where they were, and would not accept office unless and until they were in a position to be the true servants of the people, owing responsibility only to the representatives of the people, free from all control of the Executive.

The Responsivists' Bombay Meeting.

A meeting of the Responsivist Party on the other hand, consisting of members from the Central Provinces, Maharashtra, Berar and Bombay, with Mr. M. R. Jayakar presiding, was held on the 3rd May in the afternoon at Sardar Griha, Bombay. Resolutions passed by the Indian National Party at Bombay and the Sabarmati Pact were considered. After several hours' discussion, the meeting adopted the following resolutions unanimously:—

(1) "This meeting approves the action of the leaders of the Responsive Co-operation Party in having attended the Conference convened, at the instance of Pandit Motilal Nehru, at Sabarmati on the 26th April last and in having reciprocated his desire to arrive at an honourable compromise with a view to avoid conflict and disunion.

(2) "This meeting is of opinion that the Pact arrived at Sabarmati, between the leaders of the Swaraj Party, does not secure some of the points which the party, in its meeting at Akola, insisted in its policy and programme; but as the need of national unity, in the efforts for securing the goal of Swaraj at an early date, is paramount over other considerations, this meeting ratifies the said pact; and authorises its representatives who will attend the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee convened to-morrow at Ahmedabad, to support the said Pact, but to proceed no further than they have already done in the direction of modifying the decision of this party to work the Reforms for all they are worth and of using the same for accelerating the advent of full responsible Government at an early date.

(8) "This meeting is further of opinion that any alteration of the language of the Pact, either by way of amplification or explanation, is sure to have the effect of re-opening the whole question, in which case the Responsive Co-operation Party reserve to themselves the liberty of going back to their position of working the Reforms for all they are worth and obtaining the verdict of the electorate on that footing at the next general elections".

The question of allowing the members of the Responsive Co-operation Party to join the Indian National Party was next considered, and, after a long discussion, the matter was adjourned till the 7th May.

How the Pact was dropped in the A.I.C.C. meeting on the 5th May is given in its proceeding in page 26. Statements and counter-statements were subsequently issued by the leaders of both parties in defence of their action and are reproduced in full in pages 37 to 42.

The Independents & Liberals

Pt. Malaviya's Move.

On or about 22nd February Pt. Malaviya resigned from the Independent Party to work for the formation of one strong Nationalist Party with a considered Policy in the Legislative Assembly. On the eve of his resignation the following statement was issued by him :—

"The interests of the country imperatively demand that all Nationalists who are agreed, or may agree, about the goal we wish immediately to reach, should combine to form one strong Nationalist party, with a considered policy and programme of work for the early attainment of the goal. I have decided to work for the establishment of such a party, and, I think, I shall better be able to do so if I do not belong to either of the two parties which exist at present in the Assembly."

That this new party, for the organisation of which Pt. Malaviya opened his campaign at Delhi, will pursue the policy of Responsive Co-operation, including acceptance of offices, was made clear by a statement to the press issued on the 21st March :—

The statement observes that, in consultation with several prominent persons, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is calling the attention of the country to the most deplorable present political condition, and is taking steps to re-establish the Indian Nationalist Party on the original broad basis. Many members of the legislature, Hindu and Mahomedan, including several members of the Swarajya Party, have already expressed their willingness to join the party.

The party subscribes to the Congress creed, but is thoroughly opposed to the policy laid down at the Cawnpore Congress by the Swarajya Party, under which the Swarajists have walked out from the legislatures, a considerable number of them, it is stated, against their own better judgments. While the Nationalist Party will devote its united strength to accelerate the advent of Swarajya or full Responsible Government, it will utilise the legislatures, unsatisfactory though they are, to the best possible advantage it can, to prevent or remedy the national wrongs and to promote the national advancement as far as possible under the existing conditions, by pursuing what has been described as the policy of Responsive Co-operation, including acceptance of offices, subject to the constitutional control of the party.

A statement of the policy and programme of work which its members will be expected to carry out in the central as well as in the provincial legislatures, and outside them in the country, is under discussion, and will soon be published.

It will be the duty of every member of the party to promote a reasonable settlement of difference of opinion on communal questions, but, where an agreement satisfactory to all parties may not be reached, members will be free to vote as they may think just and proper in the interests of the electorate they represent.

The Delhi Meeting.

On the 25th March Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya opened at Delhi his campaign for organizing a Nationalist Party. Mr. C. Vijayaraghava-chariar presided. Among those present were Raja Sir Rampal Singh, Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, Lala Ramsarandas, Mr. Birla, Mr. B. Das and Pandit Shamlal Nehru.

Pandit MALAVIA, speaking in Hindustani, said that, after another short session, the life of the present Assembly would be over, and it was but proper that they took stock of their achievements and took steps to complete the unfinished work. The Government had repeatedly told them that the present state of the country stood in the way of further constitutional reforms. He thought that it was the Government who were delaying things and that the present condition would vanish with the advent of Self-Government.

The speaker then referred to the several resolutions passed by the present Assembly for grant of further Reforms, and showed that, on that matter there was no party and no communalism. The speaker then traced the history of Indian Nationalism. He said it was at the instance of some Government officials that the Muslim League was started. This mischief had assumed gigantic proportion to-day, and Indians mostly thought communally. One problem before the country was how to restore faith in Nationalism.

The Pandit said he was against the Swarajist policy of Non-co-operation from within the Councils. Where was Non-co-operation when the members of the Assembly and the local Councils accepted allowances, swore allegiance to the King and the Constitution and accepted membership of the Sken Committee and the Presidentship of the Assembly? Even in the two provinces of Bengal and C. P., where the Reformed Constitution was in abeyance, the Government was as strong as ever. Ultimately the end of all Council activity was to make Government responsive to the public demand and the speaker thought the people's representatives would influence the Ministers more, if they (the Ministers) were of their own party. The present Ministers were weak, and were in the hands of the Government. This was specially so in the United Provinces. The Reformed Constitution was already defective, and, whatever good it contained, was not exploited, because of the refusal of the best men to stand for Ministerships.

Their immediate concern should be to wake up the electorate. Unity was the only way to win Swaraj. If there were two weak parties in the Assembly neither of them would do any good. There should be one strong Nationalist Party in the country. This Nationalist Party should be an integral part of the Congress. The Swarajists should modify their policy and should not be opposed to Ministerships, while the Liberals should be invited to accept the Congress creed of winning Responsible Government by all legitimate and peaceful means. The party would provide a common platform and unite Hindus and Muslims. It would create political unity. The Hindu Sabha and Muslim League could then continue to exist. On

matters of religion, every one would vote according to his conscience. The policy of the party would be to bring down taxation and military expenditure and improve sanitation and introduce hand-spinning and weaving in schools. In conclusion, the Pandit said the question before the country was whether to go to the Councils or not. If they decided in favour of going, they should send able, independent and courageous representatives.

The Lahore Meeting

From Delhi the Pandit came to Lahore and on the next day the 26th March delivered a public lecture in Bradlaugh Hall, on the same subject before a fairly large audience. Lala Harikishen Lal presided. Among those present were Lala Lajpat Rai, Dr. Gokulchand Narang Lala Duniohand, Dr. Satyapal and Pandits Ruchiram and Nanakohand.

Pandit Malaviya developed more or less the same arguments, which he had advanced in his Delhi lecture. The Pandit said it was wrong, on the part of the Swarajists, to have walked out when important questions like the South African issue and several big financial problems were pending solution in the Central Legislature.

The only difference between the Swarajists and the Responsivists, said the Pandit, was that the former opposed acceptance of Ministership. He thought that, if they decided to have a strong united people's party in the legislatures, they could do more good towards solving urgent problems of the country, like poverty, unemployment and illiteracy, than by following the policy of continuous obstruction pursued by the Swarajists, which had been tried and found wanting. He saw no reason why the Swarajists should seek to go back to the Councils, at the next general election, when they had come out of them, on the plea that they were worthless.

Work within the Councils would not bring about the common weal unless they consolidated themselves into a strong united party like the one he advocated. He feared that otherwise the Government would continue to sit tight and not concede an iota of the people's demand. He urged that the Congress should be strengthened by all joining it, including the Liberals. The Government should be shown, once again, what the power of the Congress was.

Concluding, Pt. Malaviya gave the four cardinal points of his proposed Nationalist Party, i.e., acceptance of the Congress creed, working of the Councils to the best possible advantage, acceptance of offices under the Crown, and leaving members of the party free to vote as they liked on all communal matters where differences between the different communities could not be composed.

Mr. Vijayaraghavachariar addressed the meeting next. He said they should go back to the position which the Congress adopted towards the Reforms at the Amritsar Congress in 1919. The Reforms must be fully employed for what they were worth. He said that Mahatma Gandhi was wrong in allowing the Congress to be exploited by the Swarajists. The Swarajists' achievements were nil in the past, and he had no reason to expect better of them in the future. He promised that if the Responsive Co-operation failed, he would have no objection to consider a resort to Non-Co-operation again. But what form that Non-Co-operation would assume he was not able to anticipate at the present stage.

The Liberals' Coalition Move.

While Pt. Malaviya was touring in Northern India in his campaign to form a Nationalist Party, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, a distinguished member of the Liberal Party, was holding Conferences in Bombay to re-organise the Liberal Party, if necessary under a different name, taking the help of as many Independents as would join him. At such a meeting held on the 24th March presided over by Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Mr. Chintamani, while defending the Liberal policy, characterised the Swaraj Party's policy as illogical and inconsistent. Though the Reforms, he said, were defective, they were not unworkable. If an intelligent, genuine and sustained effort was made both by the Legislatures and the Indian members of the Government, whether of the Transferred or the Reserved Departments, he felt that they would feel that the Reforms were workable, though reform of the Reforms was essential. He therefore urged them to utilise the present system of Government for the benefit of the country and accelerate the introduction of Self-Government. But, if the Swarajists were successful at the ensuing election, he feared that it would be a success of the Bureaucracy. He warned the people that every vote given to the Swarajists would be a vote given to the Bureaucracy, and it would be a great political misfortune to the country.

It was a happy augury, therefore, he said, that 125 persons belonging to different parts of the country, and professing different religions and faiths had signed a requisition for a conference on the 3rd and 4th of April in order to bring about a United National Party. Among the signatories were Dr. Besant, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Kelkar, Mr. Jinnah, Sir Ali Imam and others. They would try to bring about a solution for the present complex state of affairs. But if they did not succeed, all that he would say was that the Bureaucracy would live long.

The Coalition Manifesto.

The Manifesto, signed by over a hundred persons, belonging to different political organizations excepting the Swarajists, was issued on the 24th March.

The Manifesto stated that the signatories had come to the conclusion that it was essential that they should combine and work together to the greatest possible extent, and form a coalition on the basis of such aims and objects as were common to all. The method they shall employ in pursuit of these objects was described as discriminating co-operation and opposition or responsive co-operation or constitutional agitation, including Parliamentary obstruction as, and when, necessary.

The organization will be known as the Indian Nationalist Party. They cordially invited all to attend the Conference to be held in Bombay on the 3rd and 4th April to bring the organization formally into existence, or, in case of inability to attend, to send written expression of opinion and suggestions, to Mr. C. Y. Chintamani.

Among the signatories were Dr. Annie Besant, Sir C. Sankaran Nair, Sir Mahomed Shafi, the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir P. C. Roy, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Mr. M. R.

Jayakar, B. C. Pal, G. A. Natesan, Mr. K. C. Roy, Mr. C. V. Chintamani and others.

The United Nationalist Conference.

The Conference designed to bring about a coalition of the Liberals, Independents, Responsive Co-operationists, Nationalists, and Conventionists was held at Bombay on the 3rd and 4th April. Out of 550 invited, hardly 125 attended. It was a "Purdah" Conference from which the press representatives and the Swarajists were strictly excluded. Great care was taken to see that no "undesirable" and uninvited persons got entry into the hall. Every delegate's card was carefully examined, and after signing the rolls, each delegate was conveyed to the meeting hall in charge of volunteers.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru presided over the deliberations. Among those present were Sir M. V. Joshi, Messrs. Jinnah, S. K. Bole, A. N. Surve, Joseph Baptista, R. P. Paranjpye, N. M. Joshi, Mr. Jadhav, Sir K. V. Reddi, Sir T. B. Sapru, Sir Dinshaw M. Petit, Pandits Madan Mohan Malaviya, Radhakanth Malaviya, G. K. Devadhar, B. S. Kamat, H. P. Mody, B. C. Pal, B. Bhagavat, Dr. Annie Besant, Messrs. Jambadas Dwarkadas, M. R. Jayakar, Manu Subedar, J. Chaudhari, Ratansey Morarji, Balubhai Desai, Rao Bahadur Dhoblay, D. V. Gokhale, Iqbal Narayan Gurtu, Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale, Kanji Dwarkadas, Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru, B. K. Lahiri, Krishna Kumar Mitra, G. B. Pradhan, M. D. Alekar, S. M. Bose, Rao Bahadur K. V. Brahma, V. N. Deshpande, R. R. Jayawant, Rao Bahadur R. G. Mandle, Mr. Surendranath Varma, K. Natarajan, and B. Siva Rao.

The Conference sat for two days without any break for nearly six hours, and formally brought into existence the Indian National Party. The proceedings were very lively, and was marked by a refreshing spirit of give and take.

A sharp cleavage of opinion was evident on the question whether the new party should be within or without the Congress; the Liberals very strongly expressing themselves in favour of its remaining without, inasmuch as the Congress creed was from past experience found capable of various interpretations and of including extra-constitutional methods among those defined in it as peaceful and legitimate. This brought forth a vehement attack on the Liberal Party from Mr. Baptista. Eventually, a clause definitely excluding mass civil disobedience and general non-payment of taxes was adopted.

An important amendment was moved urging the House of Commons to pass the second reading of the Commonwealth of India Bill, thus showing its sympathy with the righteous aspirations of India for Self Government, as declared in the resolution of the National Congress of 1914.

Dr. Besant made one of her finest speeches, and appealed for support with all her persuasive eloquence. But Messrs. Jinnah and K. Natarajan, having raised a point of order, the Chairman ruled that, technically the amendment was out of order, neither the notice convening the Conference nor the draft agenda having made any mention of it.

The Resolutions.

The following is the text of the resolutions that were passed :—

I (a) This Conference resolves that the party to be known as the Indian National Party be and is hereby formed.

(b) The object of the Party is to prepare for, and accelerate, the establishment of Swaraj or Full Responsible Self-Government in India, such as obtains in the Self-governing Dominions of the British Empire with due provisions for protection of the rights and interests of the minorities and the backward and the depressed classes.

(c) The Party will employ all peaceful and legitimate means, not including mass civil disobedience or general non-payment of taxes.

(d) Amongst other parliamentary methods open to it, the National Party will inside the legislatures, resort to Responsive Co-operation or opposition or co-operation as and when necessary, and it will carry on intensive propaganda work in the country in furtherance of its objects. The National Party may promote, as occasion may demand, movements individual or group resistance to authority, for definite objects, on particular occasions, in particular localities.

(e) In pursuit of its objects, the Indian National Party will work in co-operation with any other party or political group which has the same object in view, and whose methods are consistent with the policy of this party.

(f) While the party is of opinion that the Constitution embodied in the Government of India Act of 1919 is inadequate and unsatisfactory, it will utilise it to the fullest extent it can (including acceptance of offices) both to accelerate the revision of the Constitution, as well as to ameliorate the condition of the people and to advance their interests in every possible way.

(g) The party will, to the best of its opportunities, strive for the political and economic uplift of all classes, castes and communities, alike in the rural and urban areas, and will, in particular, work for the removal of untouchability and the amelioration of the condition of the backward and depressed classes.

(h) The Party will seek, by every means in its power, to promote unity among the different communities.

(i) Every person who has attained the age of 21 and signifies in writing the approval of the policy of the Party, will be eligible to be a member of the Party.

Committee Appointed.

II. (a) This Conference hereby constitute a Committee, consisting of the following members (the majority of the signatories to the manifesto convening the Conference) with power to add, to their number, and with Messrs. C. Y. Chintamani and M. C. Chagla as Provisional Secretaries.

(b) The members of the Committee belonging to the several Provinces do form themselves into Provincial Committees of the party with power to add to their number, and to appoint their office-bearers.

(c) The Committee is to take all necessary and desirable and feasible steps in furtherance of the objects of the Party, including the constitution of Provincial and District Branches, propaganda among the people, all work relating to election to the Legislative bodies, promulgation of rules not inconsistent with the policy of the party, collection of funds and the holding of an All-India Conference of the Party at such a time and place as the Committee may decide.

The Members.

The members of the Committee are Dr. Besant, Pandit Malaviya, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Mr. B. Chakravarti, Sir T. B. Sapru, Messrs. M. A. Jinnah, B. C. Pal, Sir M. Joshi, Dr. Paranjpye, Messrs. M. R. Jayakar, Joseph Baptista, J. Choudhari, Babu Krishna Kumar Mittar, Rao Bahadur R. R. Jayavant, the Hon. Mr. Rattansi Morarji, Pandit H. N. Kunzru, Sir K. V. Reddy, Mr. B. S. Kamat, Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale, Messrs. Surendranath Mullick, Bala Narayan, N. V. Gokhale, Rao Bahadur D. G. Padhye, Messrs. M. C. Chagla, D. G. Dalvi, B. K. Labiri, Raja Govindlal Shivalal, Messrs. Jehangir Pettit, B. Shiva Rao, C. Y. Chintamani, A. N. Surve, S. G. Vaze, G. K. Nariman, N. P. Patankar, B. Das, D. P. Khaitan, S. N. Bose, Manu Subedar, D. V. Gokhale.

It must be stated that Messrs. Jayakar, Baptista and D. V. Gokhale have not yet become members of the party. Mr. Jayakar explained that while he was in complete agreement with the resolutions passed that day and would have immediately joined the party if he could have acted alone, he held the position of the President of the Responsive Co-operation Party and therefore had to place the matter before his committee of which an early meeting would be called. But Mr. Jayakar agreed provisionally to serve on the Committee of the Indian National Party subject to the approval of his party.

Lala Lajpat Rai's Retort to Pt. Malaviya

The Bradlaugh Hall Speech.

Lala Lajpat Rai addressed a large audience at the Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore, on the 27th March on the political situation of the country. In the course of his speech, he said :—

No changism has no place in the economy of life, either individual or social or national. Change and progress are the very breath of life and no one need be ashamed of changing his policy and programme in accordance with the needs of the time and the necessities of the situation. A no-changer plays a losing game. I am therefore not a no-changer, and am not ashamed to proclaim that fact from the housetops. All the same, I claim that in the fundamentals of my politics I have little changed, if at all. From early youth I have believed that in principle non-co-operation with a foreign Government is the only right policy for a subject nation; that no nation should expect to gain its freedom by mere petitions and memorials and resolutions; that there is no philanthropy in politics, that no Government whether indigenous or foreign ever yields or concedes popular rights unless it is compelled to do so either by physical force or by the force of circumstances which compel a listening to popular will and popular demands.

Having believed in these principles, I have never made a fetish of what is popularly called constitutional agitation. Before 1919 we had no constitution at all. Since 1919 we have had a constitution which still denies to us any kind of responsible or popular or even responsive Government. It is all one-sided. It has

to a certain extent softened the edges of arbitrary and absolute autocracy; it has given you opportunities of parliamentary expression; beyond that it has transferred no power to the people. The power is still where it was before 1919. It is our business and purpose in life to wrest that power from where it rests at present. I say deliberately wrest because no power is ever voluntarily conceded or given without bringing into existence forces which compel the possessor of it either to share it with others or to transfer it to the latter. That is the main burden of our political activities. The question is how to discharge it effectively. Event after event has proved that reliance on the sense of justice of the ruling authorities will not do; nor will paper agitation; nor will bluffs or threats. No brave and resourceful Government even yields to these and the British Government is one of the bravest and the most resourceful. It was in the full consciousness of these fundamental truths that after the fateful Punjab tragedy of 1919, the country, under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, changed its tactics and took to practices different from those followed and relied upon till then, by the leaders of the Indian people either in the Congress or outside it. From a full-fledged co-operator, Gandhiji became a non-co-operator and with his personality and character carried the country almost entirely with him. The voice of experience and caution sounded a note of warning which was not heeded. In the overflow of self-confidence and self-reliance, Gandhiji carried everything before him and started on an experiment, extremely interesting, extremely alluring, yet based on calculations which were faulty and which failed to take notice of actual and potential conditions of Indian life.

The experiment failed, but with it failed another experiment also on which those who differed from Gandhiji had embarked. While Mahatma Gandhi and his followers were trying non-co-operation, the Moderate leaders, all men of intellectual eminence and high character, were trying co-operation. Before 1919, there

was no occasion for such an experiment. The Act of 1919 gave them one. The Moderate leaders took the ruling authorities at their word and offered whole-hearted and unreserved co-operation. The Government responded by giving them responsible offices and thus making them a part and parcel of itself. Our distinguished countrymen thus taken into confidence, worked with zeal and loyalty. They co-operated with Government even to the extent of sending 40 thousand of their "erring" but honest and devoted fellow-workers in the service of the country to prisons. Had these Moderate leaders risen equal to the occasion in December, 1921, the political history of the country since then would have been different. But they were pledged to co-operation and they kept their word. They even justified the prosecution and the incarceration of Mahatma Gandhi. They crucified patriotism as well as nationalism. The years of 1921 to 1923 were years of full co-operation by the Liberals and non-co-

operation by the Congressmen. Co-operation accompanied by high salaries, comfortable and paying positions; smiles and favours of the gods and no risks—non-co-operation resulting in handcuffs in hands, and chains and bars in feet, solitary confinement, jail diet and insults and taunts of petty as well as high officials. Both failed, but the former did not even impress. From 1921 to 1928, the Liberals had their innings. Two of them with the third since converted to Liberalism, occupied the highest offices in the Government of India. From four to two occupied responsible posts in every province. The tale is told by themselves in their evidence before the Muddiman Committee. It is a tale of absolute and miserable failure, yet we are now asked to believe that in accepting offices lies our salvation. But who has refused offices? Except in Bengal and C. P., where were they offered and refused? In any case, our Liberal friends never showed any reluctance to accept them if offered. Why were they not offered? Because, by 1924 the Government had found that they had put their stakes on a wrong horse.

In the meantime the non-co-operators of 1921 had changed their tactics. They gave up the boycott of the Councils and asked for the suffrages of the electorates. The rout of the Liberals disillusioned both themselves and the Government. It is alleged that the Swarajists took advantage of the ignorance and inexperience of the electorates. But the electorates had had the experience of 8 years of reformed Liberal rule. It did not meet with their approval. Having made full use of the Liberals to crush non-co-operation and the non-co-operators, the Government threw them over board like used lemons and began to fill up the places vacated by the Liberal veterans with reactionaries. Why? Not because the Swarajists were pig-headed to offer "constant, consistent and continuous obstruction." But because the Government had found out that Liberal co-operation did not pay. It was neither fish nor flesh nor red herring. They gained nothing thereby, neither popularity nor peace. This time they decided to stake on a different horse. They enrolled Taluqdars, Muslims and Non-Brahmins, and they found that that paid them better. May I respectfully ask Malaviya ji if the Government's selection of Ministers and Executive Councillors in the U. P. was in any measure due to the obstructionist and "senseless" tactics of the Swarajists? In the Provincial Councils the Swarajists were in a majority. The Government could very well appoint Liberals as Ministers and Executive Councillors if it wanted to. Why did it not? Is it not a fact that the Liberal Ministers who failed to resign in 1921, who fully co-operated in 1921 policy of repression, resigned not on a question of public policy but on a pure question of personal honour or ministerial prestige? If the offices were so precious, so indispensable, so useful, why were they given up so light-heartedly and why were they not accepted by others when offered? To make Swarajists responsible for the action of U. P. Government or for the action of U. P. Liberals is sheer perversity.

Let us take the case of other provinces. To begin nearer home, can it be said with any show of reason that Ministerships were filled in the Punjab, as they have been filled, on account of the "silly" policy of the Punjab Swarajists? The Punjab Swarajists were not even full Swarajists. They were less than 1/9th of the Council. Was that the case in Bombay, or Madras, or Behar, or Assam? The only two provinces where the Swarajists refused offices, were Bengal and C. P. What reason there is to conclude that if the Swarajists had accepted offices in these two provinces, their fate would have been better than that of Messrs. Chintamani and Jagat Narain in the U. P.? To me it seems that all this talk of the Swarajists having set the hand of the clock by the refusal of offices is not only silly but utter trash. Even if the Swarajists had accepted offices in Bengal and C. P. the bureaucracy would have found some way of forcing them to resign. Can any one imagine that any self-respecting Ministry would have remained in office and co-operated with the Bengal Government in their policy of deportations and imprisonments under the Ordinance? Or, is it possible, assuming the existence of revolutionary movement in Bengal, that any Ministry could have either destroyed that movement or prevented the Government of Bengal from proceeding against the supposed leaders of that movement in the way they did? No, Sir, as long as the Government of India Act of 1919 is what it is, it is simply impossible for any honourable Indian patriot to accept offices and retain them for any appreciable extent of time without being false to his country and countrymen and without loss of his own self-respect and honour. In my judgment, to talk of offices under the present circumstances is not only a great mistake, but even harmful. To accept offices under a Government which sends distinguished and patriotic Indians to prison, without trial, which defies every vote of censure passed by United Nationalists, which certifies every demand rejected by the Legislature at its sweet arbitrary will, which ignores Ministers with impunity, which pampers

subordinate servants at the cost of its Ministers, is out of question for any self-respecting party of Indian Nationalists. The very talk of it is undignified, humiliating and derogatory to our Nationalism. I am not unaware that Ministers can do some good. I am sure they can prevent a good deal of mischief. But this was only if there was a chance of their stability in their offices and of their having free hand at least in their own departments. Both are impossible in the present conditions. Ask Harkishen Lal, ask Chintamani, ask Chitnavis, ask P. C. Mitter. They have given their verdict which is in black and white. To harp on offices after that evidence, is in my humble judgment, hardly sensible. To try the tried is folly. It is said that the Ministerships may be accepted with the permission of the majority of the party and should be surrendered at the demand of the majority of the party. Obviously this does not apply to the Central Government. Even an out and out majority of Nationalists cannot force Ministers of the Government of India to resign. As regards province, it assumes decisive majority in the Provincial Councils. So far none but C. P. has had it. Can any one believe that the Government is going to follow a progressive policy in one province and a reactionary one in others? No, Sir; unless you have a majority of illfledged Nationalists in every province or in the majority of Provinces, any such policy would be mainly barren.

Let me here clear one more misunderstanding. I certainly distrust offices but not for the reason that I have no faith in the character of my countrymen, but because I believe firstly that the psychology of office is quite different from the psychology of opposition, secondly because under the constitution as it is

The Baneful Influence of Office

and under the peculiar circumstances of our National life, offices are most likely to demoralise our men. Take the case of the Muddiman Committee. It had a majority of Indians on it. Yet that majority was reduced to a minority by the defection of men who were in office and one of whom at least was converted to the side of the minority as soon as he vacated his office. I do not doubt the honesty of the man. It was not his fault. It was the fault of the office. This is by no means a solitary instance. You know another illustrious man has done the same. Is not that proof enough that office does change men, or at least being out of office changes them. Pardon me, Sir, I cannot firstly believe that under the present circumstances, a Malaviya or a Jinnah could remain in office for more than a week, or that if they did, they would not be different from what they are in opposition. The proposed party control on Ministers is also illusory. We have had the instance of a man preferring office to party, and if you make that rule, you will have many more of such cases. Please do not put an absurd and unbearable strain on party loyalty. We have tried it in several cases—in the Government of Bengal and even elsewhere. Take the case of the two friends who were members of the Lee Commission.

Then it is asked what is the difference between Council Membership, Membership of Special Committees, Presideutship of Councils, and other

The Policy of obstruction.

offices. To my mind the difference is one between heaven and earth. None of those positions carries with it the powers and the privileges of offices like the Executive Councillorships or the Ministerships. You can see it even in the Punjab. There is no analogy between the two. But this leads me to another argument. It is said that the Swarajists have changed their policy and programme from time to time. From a policy of "constant, consistent and continuous obstruction," from a policy which did not allow even memberships of Committees, they have come down to a policy which is practically a policy of responsive co-operation. Pandit Motilal does not admit that change. But even if it be true, what of it? Have they acted rightly or not? If they acted rightly, why do you make it a point against them? Does it necessarily follow that if they have gone so far, they must go further? I submit that does not follow. If they are virtually following a policy of responsive co-operation, and if that is right in your eyes, why do quarrel over words? The policy of "constant, consistent and continuous obstruction" is dead. The policy of discriminating obstruction is now what stands. What is the difference, pray, between a policy of discriminating obstruction and Parliamentary obstruction or even non-responsive opposition? Yes, there is a difference. There is a difference of psychology underlying these words. "Obstruction," though only discriminating, keeps an ideal before you and promotes a mentality the lack of which may mean death to national aspirations. A mentality of acquiescence in foreign rule, a mentality of accommodation, a mentality of utilitarian tolerance is a mentality which bars the doors of the temple of freedom. A mentality of necessary obstruction, and of eventual civil disobedience, if and when necessary, keeps those doors open and inspires hope and confidence.

For God's sake, do not deprive us of this hope. We know our difficulties are great. We know our resources are slender. We know we can neither successfully non-co-operate nor carry on a policy of wholesale obstruction, but let us not sing ourselves into the well of humiliating co-operation never to rise to life again. I admit that threat and bluff are foolish, non-effective, even ridiculous. I know mere words don't break stones. Yet even words carry a psychology which is desirable and necessary to keep alive the spark of life. Do not sell your birth right for a mess of pottage. Do not barter liberty, and freedom for a few temporary advantages. Yes, Ministers can certainly do some good. But what is the value of that, good as compared with the loss of psychology that results therefrom, and which may mean a death knell to all hopes of liberty. We want a policy of discriminate wisdom and statecraft combined with the spirit of a Rajput. A policy of petty calculations and profits in the spirit of a Bania won't help us. Instead of blaming the Swarajists for a change of policy, you should praise them. The policy of wholesale obstruction was impracticable, unwise and unworkable. The policy of discriminating obstruction is the policy which maintains the spirit, feeds the psychology and yet contributes to utility. Changing is no sin. Who has not changed? People to whom mention of obstruction was blasphemy have come down to Parliamentary obstruction. People to whom a mention of civil disobedience was anathema, have realised that the weapon is perfectly legitimate, if it is accepted as a weapon of last resort. People who were opposed to the boycott of Councils, remained to become boycotters, and insisted on remaining so. They are now again favouring using councils for what they are worth. I congratulate them on this change. Let us by all means use the Councils with discrimination, but without sacrificing the fundamentals. Use all the Committees you can. They give you knowledge, information and experience, without investing any power in you and without in any way humiliating you or subjecting you to the vagaries and anomalies of office. From Presidencies to Ministerships may be only a step, but it is a step vitally different both in spirit and in practice. But even if you must insist on Ministership, wait until the elections are over, then lay your propositions before the next Congress, settle your terms and abide by the decisions that might be arrived at then. Why divide the country on this issue at this stage? Sir, let me say in all humility that the raising of this question at this juncture is the greatest mistake which an Indian patriot who loves freedom and country, can make. No one has offered you offices. No one is likely to offer you any in the near future. Why create a breach in the national ranks on this score?

Sir, our revered leader Pt. M. M. Malaviya has charged the Swarajists with certain defalcations of duty in the Assembly. You know I have myself been a critic of Swarajist policy and practice. Even now I may not see fully eye to eye with its leader on all matters of policy, yet justice and fairness demand that I should

The Charges Against the Swarajists

lay my views before you as regards the conduct of business in the Assembly by the Swarajists. I will divide the charges as below :—

(a) General obstruction and non-co-operation; (b) Rejection of the Budget and the Finance Bill; (c) Rejection of the Bill introduced to repeal Regulation III of 1818; (d) The harm done by the walkout; (e) General policy of obstruction and non-co-operation. It is true that the Swarajists started with an avowed policy of "constant, consistent and continuous obstruction." They used language which disclosed a mentality of destruction and obstruction, but in their manifesto issued on the eve of elections in October, 1923, they made it clear that that policy could only be followed if they had majorities in the Assembly and the Councils. Let us see what they said and did when they started their work in the Assembly and the Councils. As soon as the Swarajists reached Delhi in January, 1924, their first thought was to create such relations with their Nationalists in the Assembly as will make united action possible. The Swarajists were in a minority, though they formed the biggest party in the Assembly. Liberals were only a few; perhaps not more than half a dozen, the Independents were larger in numbers than the liberals but much fewer than the Swarajists. It was realised by all parties that if they wanted to make any impression on the Government, they had to take united action at least in certain respects. I was present at the first meeting that was held in the hall of the Eastern Hotel at Raisina under the presidency of Mr. C. R. Das. Most of the prominent members in the Assembly were present including Pt. Malaviya, Pt. Motilal, Mr. Jinnah, and the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri. It transpired at that meeting that there was more common ground between Pt. Motilal and Mr. Jinnah than between any other two leaders. Liberals decided to give up their party name and merge themselves into a new party called the party of Independents. Mr. Jinnah was selected as the leader of this party with the result that a large number of non-Swarajist elected Muslims joined that party. The Swaraj Party in the Assembly openly declared that they

were out for a coalition with the Independents if they could do so without sacrifice of principles. Both parties met and as a result of negotiations formed a larger party including both. Both maintained their separate existence also. Their unity was only for combined action whenever possible, in the Assembly. In the first year this arrangement acted very well. The resolution relating to the demand for a full dominion status was proposed by Dewan Bahadur Rangachariar, but the amendment moved by Pandit Motilal Nehru was accepted by him and the rest of the Nationalists. Mr. Jinnah said: 'I am in entire agreement with the amendment that is moved by Pandit Motilal Nehru.' In the course of the speech Pandit Motilal made in support of the motion, he said:—

"We have come here to do something which we have not been doing so far. Sir, we have come here to offer our co-operation, non-co-operators as we are, if you will care to co-operate with us. That is why we are here. If you agree to have it, we are your men; if you do not, we shall, like men, stand up on our rights, and continue to be non-co-operators. Now what threat is there in this? When I say what I am, what threat do I convey? Am I conveying any new idea? If we conform to the programme of non-co-operation, are we doing something that we have not been doing? We have so far been working outside the Councils and this Assembly with a definite object. That object we have still in view, that object we consider perfectly legitimate. But we have come here because the dust and heat of the controversy which has been raging for the last three or four years, in fact ever since the inauguration of these reforms, has obscured the real issues. We have come here and our coming here affords an opportunity to clear those issues as no other opportunity can. We are here for that purpose. We are not here simply to wreck or to destroy. We have been referred to as a party of destruction and wreckers. Yes, we are out to wreck and destroy things of evil, and rightly or wrongly, we think that the present reforms are a thing of evil. We have come to ask you to meet us, so that we may put our heads together,—to hear us and to let us hear you and then to come to some definite conclusion. If we agree, well and good; if we do not, we shall agree to differ, and the issues will be clarified. That is the thing. It is no business of ours to wreck things which we believe are doing good to the country. At least it will be admitted that we have no personal motives. We have not any axes of our own to grind. We believe in a certain principle. We believe that our country has reached a particular stage, and that at that particular stage it is entitled to certain rights, which rights are being withheld from it. We say that we cannot get those rights by an armed revolution, by delivering a great thumping blow, which alone in other countries has gained freedom for the people of those countries. In the very nature of things we cannot do that and therefore we say, we shall simply not assist you. What law, what reason, is there which can compel us to co-operate with people who do not co-operate with us?"

I ask the critics if the above represented a mentality of destruction or wrecking or even of wholesale obstruction. The last but one paragraph of the speech was also pertinent:—

"I should like to say one word more, Sir, before I sit down, and that is that the opportunity which this occasion offers is an opportunity which should not be thrown away either by the Government or by us. It will serve no useful purpose to continue the state of things which has existed during the last few years. The Government is very well aware that there is a section of the public of India which cannot be entirely ignored and which demands for the country certain rights and is prepared to put those rights before you but is not likely to be frightened away by threats. It is not prepared to submit to conditions which are foreign to its policy, but is fully prepared to bear all the consequences of its action, action which it has decided upon after mature and deliberate consideration. I say this simply because the tone of the debate as set by my friend Mr. Rangachariar was different to the tone of the debate as modified by the Hon'ble the Home Member. I have said already, and I repeat it again, 'that we are not here to threaten any body, nor even in our activities outside, is it any part of our business to threaten any body,' and I submit that what is taken as a threat certainly was not intended to be a threat. All that we want is that you should consider the proposition which we place before you in the same mood without saying that this thing or that thing will happen to us. It must be remembered that we, some of us at least, have burnt our boats behind us. We take our stand upon these rights and it does not matter to us in the least what happens so long as we go on rendering such service to our country as we believe it is entitled to." In supporting Pandit Motilal, Mr. Jinnah observed: "We have realised, Sir, and I have very little doubt about it in my mind, that Dyarchy has failed, and I believe I am not the only one who thinks so. I believe even those men who faithfully and loyally worked the reforms, men who were wedded to these reforms, say

so. Take the case of Mr. Chintamani. What does he say? He was one of the stalwarts amongst the supporters of the reforms."

Pandit Motilal's amendment was eventually adopted by the House by 76 to 48. The minority included Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer who is one of the signatories of Mr. Chintamani's coalition manifesto, and Mr. Samarth, now a member of the India Council.

Let us now see what happened in the debate on the Budget. The Swaraj Party wanted to throw up the whole Budget and also the Finance Bill, but the Independents would not agree. So, as a compromise, it was settled that only 4 first demands should be thrown out and after that the other demands be examined on the merits.

In moving the rejection of the 1st. demand, Pt. Motilal observed :—

"To put it shortly, Sir, I propose on general grounds to refuse to vote money for the needs of the Government of India. My grievance is not against this or that branch of the administration but against the entire administration of the Government of India. I have selected 'customs' simply because it happens to be the first item on the list of grants."

He also made it clear that his proposal "had nothing to do whatever with what has been described as the wrecking or the destroying policy of the non-co-operators." This motion was carried by 63 to 56. Several stalwarts of the Independent Party who have now signed the coalition manifesto, voted with the Government—among others, Sir Sivaswami Iyer, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Mr. K. C. Roy; Messrs. Jinnah and Malaviya voted with the majority. Mr. B. C. Pal, another signatory of the coalition manifesto, remained not voting on the first motion, but on the second motion he went over to the Government side. But what was most significant in that year's proceedings in the Assembly was the debate on the Finance Bill. When the Finance Member asked permission for the introduction of the Finance Bill, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya moved that the permission be not granted, and in support of the motion made a speech which shall always stand almost unique and monumental in the proceedings of the Assembly on the subject of "grievances before supplies." I will read a few extracts from that speech :—

"Sir I rise to oppose the motion that the Finance Bill introduced by the Finance Member be taken into consideration. I do so with a full sense of the responsibility which this attitude casts upon me. I do so after fully weighing the possible advantages and the disadvantages of the course which I am going to ask the House to adopt. We have fully heard what the Honourable the Finance Member has said regarding the merits of the Bill and the constitutional desirability of this House accepting the Bill, of its sharing the responsibility with the Government of passing the Bill and of co-operating with the Government in this very important matter, whereby, in the view of the Honourable the Finance Member, this House will give proof of its fitness, to receive a further measure of responsibility. Having heard all that, I feel, Sir, that the only course which a man in my position, representing the people of this country and desiring to serve their best interests, can take in reference to this Bill is to urge on the House that it should not be taken into consideration."

"The Provinces have had three years of experience of the reforms. They have had the luxury of having their expenditure increased, largely increased; they have had the luxury of having Ministers appointed on salaries which the people did not approve, except in one Province; they have had the luxury of having debates conducted and part of the Government and transferred subjects conducted by Ministers who are supposed to represent the people. 'They had found that they have been worse off than they were before the reforms were introduced.' They have found that the subjects which were transferred to them were transferred without the where-withal to administer them, which is like handing over a baby to a nurse while we withhold from her the milk and the food with which the child should be fed. The transferred subjects have been starved. Progress has not been recorded where it should have been recorded in the beneficent services by which the people, the nation, can be built up. The experience has been a very sad one. So far, then, as the Provinces are concerned, there is only one verdict in which, I hope, officials and non-officials will join, namely, 'that the system of dyarchy has failed, and that the sooner it is buried and replaced by another healthier and sounder system the better will it be for the dignity and usefulness of the Government, and for the welfare of the people.'"

Pandit Motilal spoke thus in his speech in the Assembly about the Central Government :—

"The Central Government have outlived their time, have outlived their utility, and that the system stands now condemned in the eyes of all sensible people. It is a system which is quite unique, absolutely singular; it has no parallel to it."

Speaking about the co-operation offered by Pt. Motilal, he said :—

"Now, Sir, when we came to this Assembly in this state of affairs we put our heads together and we decided to offer co-operation to the Government in order to rectify it. We put forward a demand, not that full self-government should be immediately established here. We put forward a demand that there should be a Round Table Conference, representative of various interests in this country, European, Indian, official and non-official, which should meet and consider the situation, discuss the pros and cons of the problem, and try to convince some of us who urged advance towards responsible Government that we were wrong and be prepared to be convinced by us who had studied the question and whom it deeply affected that those who did not agree with us in the beginning were in the wrong. I cannot imagine, Sir, a more reasonable attitude of mind on the part of the representatives of any people."

Concluding his remarks on the constitutional aspect, he observed :—

"This, Sir, is the constitutional aspect. So long as the Government of India Act is not revised, therefore, I find that, with my sense of self-respect, with the little conscience that God has given me, I cannot support taxation, either now or in future. Take away the Government of India Act if you please. That is a threat which has oftentimes been uttered by not very responsible, thinking, people, but take the Government of India Act away if you so please. We shall not complain of it; but if you must govern India in the forms of civilized Government, let reality be introduced in place of the sham that you have established here."

"In this state of things we are asked to-day to vote this Finance Bill, and I submit, Sir, we cannot conscientiously, honourably do so."

"The third ground on which I regret I must refuse to support the Finance Bill is the want of confidence that many of us feel in the Government of India as at present constituted."

These extracts show what Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya's position was in 1924.

The Independents' Position in the Assembly

The question then arises, has anything happened since then which justifies the change of attitude which Panditji advocates now? Let us now see what happened in 1925. The Independents in the Assembly refused to support the Swarajists in the rejection of the Finance Bill. Mr. Jinnah said that his party had made a mistake the previous year. So the Nationalist party created by a coalition of the Swarajists and Independents was dissolved. There were deplorable scenes in the House and there were recriminating articles in the Press. I need not rake up that controversy, but one thing is clear that in 1925 the Independents changed their attitude, not the Swarajists.

In 1926 again the Swarajists discussed the Railway Budget on the merits, and with the help of some Independents (because the Independents have never acted as a solid party) succeeded in defeating Government several times. When, however, the time arrived for the discussion of the general Budget, both the Swarajists and the Independents refrained from taking part. Pt. Malaviya also was a member of this "conspiracy of silence." Now, was this obstruction or co-operation? If it was obstruction, then all the Independents including Moderates, participated in it, and no special blame could be laid on the Swarajists. The Swarajists made it clear that if the Independents promised them their support in throwing out the Finance Bill on the same principles on which Malaviyaji had thrown it out in 1924, they will stay, and postpone their walk-out, but if this was not to be, they saw no particular reason why they should stay in, to help the Moderates, and the Independents in throwing out only particular items. The Independents were also at the time contemplating to walk out with the Swarajists and they might have done so, but for the Frontier debate which had to come after the Finance Bill had been disposed of. Here again it is obvious that the only difference between the policy of the Independents and that of the Swarajists was one of degree and not of kind. Both have co-operated; both have obstructed. To pick out the Swarajists for an attack is extremely unfair and unjustifiable.

Now let us see what happened after the "walk-out." On the 11th March in the course of the debate on the constitutional question, The Moral of the walk-out. Dewan Bahadur Rangachariar said with reference to the Swarajists :—

"Do you acknowledge then that they (i.e., the Swarajists) represent the country? You cannot have it both ways. Either they represent the country or they do not represent the country. If they represent the country, respect their views. And what

have they done? Have they not offered you sincere, hearty co-operation on the floor of this House for the last two years? Did they not assist you time after time? Did they persist with the plan with which they came to this House? Where was the persistent obstruction with which they started? Sir, did not they come down in the month of March, 1924? Did they not come down in May, 1924, and in September, 1924. Did they not come down in 1925, serving on Committees, co-operating with you, giving you their valuable advice, and trying to shape your legislation, trying to make suggestions to you in the form of questions and Resolutions? What is it they did not do which we have been doing in the first Assembly or in this Assembly? They have been doing the very same things which the Liberals, the Radicals and the Independents have been doing in this House. What was the difference? Why then shy at them? You have driven them out by your heartless procedure; you have driven them out by your shilly shallying with this question. That is the truth of it. They would have remained here if you had really shown a change of heart, if you had shown a change in the angle of vision in this matter. The country has been crying for this. They say these Reforms are inadequate and unsatisfactory and cannot be worked. You admit it. I do not think there is any one here who does admit it. . . . The minority condemned it, the majority condemned it, only the majority was for tinkering with it here and there. . . . Do you expect us, responsible people, to come here and waste our time and our energy and our intellect merely to pass pious Resolutions which you can discard?

Let us see what Pt. Malaviya said:—

"A new Assembly came in 1924. Who came in? Many men who had kept back on the first occasion, men who thought that the system of dyarchy which had been introduced was very unsatisfactory, men who were in principle entirely opposed to the system, still came in, and came in with the desire to mend the system or to end it, with the desire either to have it improved or to have the system as it existed, destroyed. Was it a crime to do so? Is not that language known to politicians all over the world that when you want to improve a system, you do talk of either mending it or ending it, of destroying the old system so that a new system might be substituted for it? That was the object with which these gentlemen came in. And who were they? Many of them men who had suffered imprisonment most unjustly for various periods of time, men who were among the most educated, several of them among the most esteemed of Indians. Such were the men who joined the Councils, the Legislatures all over the country. And what was the first act, the first important act which they resorted to?

There was a demand put forward in February, 1924. That demand was not the demand of only one Party. It was not the demand of the Swaraj Party; it was not the demand of the Independent Party. It was a joint demand of all Nationalists in this Assembly, in fact practically of all Indians who were free to record their vote in favour of any proposition which helped the people. Now, that demand, I submit, indicated very clearly a desire for co-operation with Government, and the speech delivered by my Hon. Friend Pt. Moti Lal Nehru in putting forward that demand could not have been delivered in a better spirit of co-operation than it was. You remember, the House will remember, Sir, and Pandit Motilal Nehru reminded the House of it the other day, that he had said to Government: 'If you accept our proposal, I am your man, I offer co-operation if you will accept it.'

"And let me here say a word as to the course adopted even by my Swarajist friends. I submit, Sir, that even those who disagree with them, even those who, like me, think that they have not adopted the right course, must admit that the fact that 40 or more members of this Assembly should have decided to walk out of this Assembly and that a number of highly-educated men who wish well of their country and wish to serve it according to their lights have by concerted action retired from the Legislature throughout the country, is a fact of serious import. It certainly shows that the present system of Government calls for an early reconsideration."

On this evidence, can it be said that the Swarajists have harmed the country by their policy of obstruction? I submit the charge is preposterous.

Is it not a fact that the Independents proposed the total omission of grants in order to register their protest against the Government's failure to

Budget and Finance Bill. make a constitutional advance? May I ask how was it different from the conduct of the Swarajists? Why did

Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya bless that procedure and make speeches in its favour if he considered it to be harmful and bad? I know he is perfectly honest. I know he wants unity. But why start for unity by "disunity" and by making unwarranted attacks on the party whose co-operation you want?

The Political Situation in Bengal

The Bengal Muslim Party.

Sir Abdur Rahim has issued a Manifesto setting out the objects and programme of the new Bengal Muslim Party that he is calling into being. This political Party is unique in many respects. It "will think in detail for all sections and classes of the people—Muslims and Hindus, Anglo-Indians and Christians, the ryots and labourers, the depressed classes and untouchables, with a view to improve the economic and intellectual condition of all and to secure such a distribution of political power among the general population that domination by a class of monopolists and the intelligentsia may become ultimately impossible." Should it puzzle anybody as to why a *Muslim* party was necessary to "think in detail" for the *Hindus* and *Christians* as well. Sir Abdur Rahim provides the philosophical justification. Says he, "We have been led to form this party not in any spirit of narrow communalism or religious exclusiveness, but because as inheritors of a great democratic social system, with our outlook unembarrassed by the limitations of caste and untainted by untouchability, we feel that special responsibility rests on us to contribute our best to the realisation of the true idea of government of the people, by the people and for the people." But cannot the same claim be made by the Christians, and why is it necessary for the Bengal *Muslim* party to look after the Christians too? Nor can the Hindus be blind to the fact that the democracy and brother-hood of the Muslims is limited to their co-religionists, and beyond the line, give place to fanatic intolerance. As for the "great democratic social system" contributing to the development of political democracy, the Moslem past shows us military dictatorship and autocratic rulers *galore*, some very good, some very bad—but so far, the admittedly democratic social system of Islam has shown no signs anywhere yet to blossom forth into political democracy. If the aspiration exists, it is an aspiration still. It requires, therefore, more than ordinary credulity to accept at its face value this high mission of the Bengal Muslim Party, and it will go hard to quarrel with Hindus and Christians if they decline with thanks to be looked after by an organisation in which they cannot, in the nature of it, have any lot or part.

How does the party propose to achieve its high mission? India is to be converted into a federation of autonomous provinces with the Central Government's function confined to certain delegated subjects. The Bengal Legislature is to have Muslim members elected on a communal register, proportionate to the Muslim population, which is 56 per cent., with "just and proper representation of minorities and communal interests." Muslims are to be secured 56 per cent. of places in the local bodies and in the services, and in administrative bodies controlling Primary, Secondary, and University education, and Muslim students are to be guaranteed benefit in a similar proportion. In fact, everything is to be cut up along communal lines and the Muslims *per se* are to have 56 per cent. of the power and influence; in other words, Bengal is to have Muslim Raj. Provincial autonomy, therefore, means simply a method whereby Muslim Raj is to be guaranteed against any

checks on the part of the Central Government. To this Mahammadanisation of Bengal, everything must be made subservient. The High Court is to be relieved of administrative duties and brought under the control of the Bengal Government; a Muslim University is to be created in Bengal and the Calcutta University is to be truncated. Everyone of these is either an unnecessary or a retrograde measure. From the recent debates in the Bengal Legislative Council, it is clear that by a Muslim University, Sir Abdur Rahim means an Urdu University for the Muslims of Bengal, over 90 per cent. of whom have Bengali for their mother tongue. It is equally preposterous that Muslim students should be ensured educational benefits in direct proportion, not of their number, but of the population of Muslims in Bengal. It means that the amount of money to be spent on Muslim students, the number of seats in the class rooms, the number of Muslims on the bodies controlling education should all be proportional to the population of Muslims in Bengal irrespective of the number of Muslim students that offer themselves to profit by these arrangements, and irrespective of the availability of enough number of Muslims competent to sit on these bodies. Even more dangerous is the proposal to deprive the High Court of its power to recruit and control the subordinate judicial services. The trend of public opinion has all along been to concentrate in the High Courts all judicial administration, and thereby, protect the judiciary from all political influences. But Sir Abdur Rahim would have it the other way, for the only reason that the High Court, as now constituted did not appoint Muslims as District Munsiffs in the proportion of the Muslim population!

The sole object and purpose of the Bengal Muslim party is, therefore, to create Muslim Raj in Bengal. And yet with a naivete which is no less astute than the astuteness that he complains of in the Nationalist Hindus, Sir Abdur Rahim protests that his party is not actuated by narrow communalism or religious exclusiveness and invites the co-operation of the European community. It is true that he has become more diplomatic than at Aligarh: he now screens his rank communalism with a thin camouflage of high-sounding and benevolent phrase. But it is no less real and is the only operative part of the manifesto. This policy is but a slight, though more polite, variant of the slogan of the *Muslim Outlook* of Lahore, which protests that "we have done more to make (Hindu-Muslim) unity possible than any party of politicians, excluding the Muslim League," and straightaway proceeds to explain how. "We have consistently advocated an extremist policy of communalism for Muslims." "It is only when the solidarity of Muslims and their temper is impressed upon the Hindu communalists that the latter will be shocked into making those concessions to justice which nothing but force will extort from them. When Mr. Gandhi once declared that through riots the country will pass to unity, he spoke more wisely than he intended or even knew..... Only if riots shock the Hindu communalists into abandoning their greed, will good come out of evil..... The only possible prevention of riots which we can prescribe is for the intelligentsia among the Muslims to unite in a determined and quite ruthless political party which will block all the efforts of all the other parties to secure the slightest extension or revision of the reforms. The Muslims should candidly declare an alliance with the Europeans and work that alliance so strenuously that the Hindu communalists will despair and surrender at discretion." Here, we venture to think, is Sir Abdur Rahim's policy—with the mask off.—(*The Servant of India*).

Sir Abdur Rahim's Manifesto:

The following is the text of the Manifesto referred to above, which was issued by Sir Abdur Rahim by the middle of April 1926 :—

"We shall work to obtain for India a Constitution framed on the basis of a federation of autonomous Provinces, the Central Government's function being confined to the administration of such subjects as directly concern the whole of India such as the Army, the Navy and the Air-Force, foreign and inter-Provincial relations, communications, currency, etc. We affirm our firm belief in the necessity for India keeping abreast of the European nations in arts and sciences, and we are opposed to isolating India from the progressive tendencies of the times by shunting her into by-paths of ancient, mediæval obscurantism.

"To achieve the above end we, the representatives of the Moslem community, which comprises in the Province a population of 26 millions, have constituted ourselves into the Bengal Moslem Party. We have been led to form this party, not in a spirit of narrow communalism, or religious exclusiveness, but because, as inheritors of a great democratic social system, with our outlook unembarrassed by limitations of caste and untainted by untouchability, we feel a special responsibility rests on us to contribute our best to the realisation of that true ideal of a Government of the people, for the people.

"Furthermore, as the Moslem community of Bengal, which form 56 per cent. of the total population, suffer in all their sections from considerable disabilities and difficulties, regarding their political and economic development, and seriously affecting their general welfare, it is incumbent on us, as their representatives, to combine for the purpose of promoting special measures for their removal. The experience of the last three years has shown how time after time the Moslem members of the Council belonging to the Swaraj or Nationalist parties, which are organisations controlled by astute Hindu politicians who supply the brains and the funds of the parties, had to sacrifice, at their behest, the clear interests of the Mahomedan electorate and the Moslem community.

The Programme.

"We shall always be ready to work with other political groups whose attitude is not inconsistent with our political creed with a view to coalesce with such of them as may be inclined to accept the essential principles governing our programme of work. The programme of work includes the following :—

"To take steps to bring about an early revision of the Government of India Act with a view to placing the Indian Constitution on such a basis as is best calculated to lead to the establishment of full responsible Government with Dominion status in the British Empire; provided, however, that, as laid down at the 17th Session of the All-India Moslem League, held at Aligarh on the 30th and 31st December, 1925, in any scheme of the future constitution of India the following basic and fundamental principles be secured and guaranteed: (a) All legislatures of the country and other elected bodies shall be continued on the definite principle of the adequate and effective representation of minorities in every Province, without reducing the majority in any Province to a minority, or even to an equality.

"Applying this principle to the conditions of Bengal, we shall strive to secure the amendments of the law in accordance with the amended resolution passed by the Bengal Legislative Council at its session commencing on the 16th February, 1926, namely, 'that the election of representatives to the Bengal Legislative Council be proportionate to the numerical strength of the different communities of this Province, with just and proper representation of minorities and communal interests, and (b) the representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present provided it shall be open to any community at any time to abandon its separate electorate in favour of a joint electorate."

The Tide of Communalism.

It is nothing short of tragedy that some of the best Nationalists in India should be discussing whether or not to accept political offices and such power as the present constitution places in popular hands, when the very foundations of nationalism are being threatened, as they were never before, by the rising tide of communalism and when the communal fanatics have made up their minds to capture the power and exploit it for their own narrow purpose. The urgent problem of to-day is not whether Dyarchy should be accepted or not, but whether all good and true Indians should combine together, and if possible, with Government, press into service every legitimate means and save nationalism from being smothered under an avalanche of communalism.

We shall not pause to survey in detail the strides that communalism has made during the last few years; we shall only refer to certain happenings of the last few weeks which serve as a sure index of the communal flood. In Southern India, the Non-Brahman Party had attempted to rope in and retain in its fold the Muslims and the Depressed classes, but both these have of late broken off from the party. The Muslims of Madras are organising themselves into a separate Muslim Party. The depressed classes under Mr. M. C. Raja have demanded separate communal electorates. At the Non-Brahman Conference held early in May in Bombay, while the President and Chairman of the Reception Committee gave an admirable lead in keeping out all anti-Brahman rancour and hostility, there was an influential section of Non-Brahmans from the moffussil who went the length of contemplating an entente with the Muslims in order the more successfully to indulge in their vendetta against the Brahmans. It reflects great credit on the organisers of the Conference that these hot-heads were not allowed to have their way.

But the Brahman and Non-Brahman trouble is as nothing compared with the Hindu-Muslim trouble in North India from the Punjab to East Bengal. If Dr. Moonje's address to the Punjab Hindu Conference was deplorable, the speeches at the Khilafat Conference at Delhi were wild beyond measure. Let alone the Ali Brothers; even Hakim Ajmal Khan has joined the cry that Islam was in danger and spoke of the "onslaught of Hindu enmity" and so far forgot himself as to threaten that "one could not stop at the defensive, but would have to cross the boundary line into aggression" and contemplate "a grave fight if the Hindus still did not take warning and change their attitude and methods." Here is a public and deliberate defence of and incitement to, aggression, the consequences of which were anticipated in the Calcutta riots. The contagion of Calcutta has spread to East Bengal from where are reported cases of the desecration of Hindu temples whilst there is hardly a whisper of mosques being desecrated! The temper of the Muslims is indicated by the failure of the meeting of prominent Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs called together by the Governor of Bengal to come to an agreement regarding the Sikh religious procession, which was to have been held in early April, but which, at the instance of the Government, in the then disturbed condition of Calcutta, the Sikhs consented to postpone to the 9th of May. Commenting on the failure, *The Statesman*, an Anglo-Indian paper, said that "Mahomedans are apparently standing out for the total cessation of music at all times in the neighbourhood of mosques. The Hindus are prepared

to guarantee complete cessation at prayer time, but do not see their way to give wider guarantees which in the city, where the mosques are not confined to specially Mahomedan quarters, would impose intolerable obligations. There the matter stands. The sympathy of the disinterested observer will not be with the Mahomedans, who in the time of excitement are apparently endeavouring to drive hard an unusual bargain." The *Muslim* of Calcutta corroborated the *Statesman's* description of the Mahomedan leaders' attitude at the meeting and the resolution of the Jamait defended it.

The desperate nature of the present situation is indicated by the change in the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi towards the question. He was the most emphatic in postulating that there could be no Swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. Time was when he would rush to the scene of communal trouble, and with the help of his invincible Satyagraha, compose animosities, settle dispute and get the communities to fall round each others' necks. If only the Government stood out and allowed him a free hand, he would go to Malabar and Kohat; he fasted for twenty-one days and brought about the historic Unity Conference at Delhi in Sept. 1924. But to-day he turns a deaf ear to the appeals of Mr. Sen-Gupta and the *Statesman* to go to Calcutta and bring peace. This apostle of non-violence now confesses that an amicable settlement is possible only when Hindus and Muslims are tired of fighting. He even goes the length of advising other popular leaders to leave things alone and retire like himself. Mr. Gandhi's change is perhaps the most revealing and impressive index of the seriousness of the communal antagonisms. These may be "part of the invariable growing pains of the consolidation of nationalism," as Lord Olivier points out. But they need careful handling, lest the "growing pains" should prove too much and should kill nationalism altogether.

It is impossible to sustain the theory that the Calcutta revolt was the work of the *goondas* or desperate characters that infest every great city. It cannot be a mere coincidence that Muslim priests and politicians make it a point of honour with them to prevent Hindu processions with music to pass mosques even when the faithful are not at prayers; that Muslim politicians threaten aggression and the *goondas* indulge in sacrilege and butchery. As Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew diagnosed, the communal trouble is mainly political, and inspired, or at least connived at, by politicians.

Continuous efforts were made by non-official bodies, particularly the Congress, to settle the points at issue between the communities. The last such was the Unity Conference at Delhi which was the most representative and influential. But all these have failed to bring peace. The root-cause of the failure is, in our opinion, their fundamentally wrong basis, that Muslims had claims to superior and special citizenship, which was to be sustained and preserved by a special communal electorate. With a view to purchase peace and unity, the vital principles of common citizenship were sacrificed. It was like tolerating and regulating vice instead of suppressing it. It is now clear that both principle and peace have been sacrificed. If peace is impossible in any event, it is worth while to save the principle at least. *Communal electorates must go* and that as early as possible. Minorities and backward communities may be provided for by reservation of seats in the legislatures and by widening the franchise. (From *The Servant of India*—20th May '26).

The Calcutta Riots.

The following extracts from the report of the Commissioner of Police, on the Calcutta riots from the 2nd to 15th April 1926 was published in the Calcutta Gazette for general information :—

Communal rioting between Hindus and Muhammadans broke out suddenly on the 2nd April and continued for several days, on a scale which is unprecedented in the history of Calcutta.

The immediate cause of the rioting was the failure of the band of an Arya Samaj procession to cease playing their instruments when passing Dinu Chamrawalla's mosque, in Harrison Road, at the time of the 'Azan' or "invitation to prayer," preparatory to the four o'clock public worship, but it is unreasonable to suppose that this small incident could possibly have been the sole cause of such extensive riots as those which followed. On the contrary, there can be no doubt that this was purely the occasion and that the cause must be sought in more remote circumstances.

To appreciate what followed it needs to be stated at the outset that the first collision took place between up-country Hindus and Muhammadans and that by far the greater portion of the rioting and attendant crime has been confined to this section of the population of Calcutta.

Outbreak of Riots.

As has been stated, the immediate cause of the outbreak was the playing of instruments in front of the Dinu Chamrawalla's mosque by the Arya Samaj procession. The passing of the mosque at the junction of Harrison Road and Central Avenue had been successfully negotiated; music had been stopped without difficulty and the procession passed in safety. They arrived at Dinu Chamrawalla's mosque, however, at the time when the 'muezzin' was about to pronounce the 'Azan'—the invitation to Muhammadans to join in prayer—and silence on the part of the band was again invoked. This time, however, the direction was not immediately obeyed and the musicians continued to play their instruments. Some Muhammadans then came out from the mosque and remonstrated with the processionists, and ultimately the Police Inspector in charge, with the assistance of the leaders of the procession, succeeded in stopping the music. One drummer, however, continued obstinately to beat his drum and, by so doing, supplied the spark to set off the powder train which the events of the past few years had combined to prepare.

Narrative of Important Events.

April 2nd,—From this stage onwards, it is difficult to speak with certainty as to the exact sequence of events, but the following narrative of the more important events, has been carefully compiled from the statements of two European eye-witnesses of the outbreak and from a series of reports from unconnected sources and it may, therefore, be accepted as a record which approximates as closely to the actual sequence of events as any human record of events happening in such quick succession could possibly do.

It seems clear, then, that the first militant act was committed by some Muhammadans in front of the mosque, who threw some clods of earth which they took from the road and they were followed almost immediately by another Muhammadan who threw an empty packing case at the procession. At this the processionists broke loose, the neighbouring shops and buildings were looted and brickbats and soda-water bottles were hurled at the mosque, smashing some of the window-panes and glass ornaments. They attacked the Muhammadans standing near the mosque and freely belaboured them with lathis and stones. The Muhammadans were then joined by a large number of their co-religionists living in the locality, who poured into Harrison Road from the by-lanes. In the initial stages of the rioting, two cart-loads of new bricks arrived on the scene—apparently destined for some building under construction—and the combatants on both sides helped themselves freely to the contents. There appear, however, to have been other stores of ammunition in the vicinity, and it is alleged that bricks were thrown from the roof of the house adjoining that occupied by Babu Madan Mohan Barman—a prominent figure in the Hindu Mahasava—by men who subsequently ran on to the roof of the latter's house. Finding the situation entirely beyond his control, the Inspector in charge of the procession hastened at once to Jorasanko police-station, from where he telephoned to the police headquarters Lal Bazar and mobilised the police-station staff, numbering about twenty-five constables, with whom he returned to the scene of the riot.

The battle raged furiously for some minutes, but the Muhammadans, who were now numerically superior to their opponents, put the processionists to headlong flight and

thereafter remained in control of the street. Trams and buses were stopped and the Hindu occupants were freely belaboured. Hindu pedestrians were also seized and beaten and the situation became so grave that in a very short time the shops were closed and all the vehicular traffic was suspended.

Dy. Commissioner Assaulted.

A strong contingent of police consisting of sergeants and constables of the traffic police then arrived in charge of Mr. F. D. Bartley, Deputy Commissioner, Head-quarters, and all rioting in the immediate vicinity was quickly put down. In the process, however, Mr. Bartley was struck on the eye by a brickbat and a sergeant who was near him was also injured, while a Gurkha constable who endeavoured to protect Mr. Bartley was stabbed from behind and seriously wounded. Piquets were posted on all important crossings and other strategic points and the situation was brought under control.

Sporadic rioting continued, however, in the side streets and by-lanes until mid-night, and individual Mahomedans and Hindus were waylaid and assaulted by members of the opposite communities.

Shortly after the arrival of Mr. Bartley, it was noticed by the Inspector of the Jorasanko police-station that the Hindu temple in Mandir Street, and the idol of Siva contained therein, had been damaged. This outrage appears to have been committed by local Mahomedans, who raided the temple, assaulted the Oriya servant who was present there, broke the image of Siva with stones and iron weights and took away all the movable articles inside the temple, as a measure of revenge for the damage inflicted on the Dinu Chamrawalla's mosque.

In the meantime, the news of the riot had spread to other parts of Calcutta and sympathetic rioting arose. At about 7 A.M. a disturbance took place behind Maitan's Theatre in Corporation Street and there was considerable excitement in the New Market. At about 8 P.M. the dead body of an unknown man was forcibly pushed into a tram-car on Lower Chitpur Road near Tara Chand Dutta Street and a sweet-meat shop looted in Phear's Lane. At 10-30 P.M. a large mob armed with "lathis," including a number of Khilafat volunteers, passed along Central Avenue towards Zakaria Street and subsequently proceeded along Harrison Road towards Chitpur Road, but, although their attitude was menacing, no actual collision took place and at a suitable opportunity they were intercepted and disarmed. At 11-30 p.m., a Hindu boarding-house at No. 36, Central Avenue, was attacked by a mob armed with brickbats, and a "bania's" shop was looted. During the course of the day, a constable of the Howrah Armed Police, in plain clothing, was stabbed by a Mahomedan near Howrah Bridge.

Renewal of Hostilities

April 3rd.—After a comparatively quiet night, rioting again broke out at 8 A.M., on the 3rd April, at the junction of Harrison Road and College Street, at Rajabazar and near Seaklah Railway Station—the reason for the renewal of hostilities being that a party of Hindus, including a few Sikhs, on hearing a rumour to the effect that the Sikh Gurudwara in Mechu Bazar had been set on fire, attacked and damaged the Jumna Pir Dargah in Clive Street. This thoroughly enraged the Mahomedan population, who proceeded immediately to take revenge for this outrage. They threatened the Parashuath Temple in Badri Das Temple Street and set fire to the Siva Temple in Mandir Street which they had damaged on the preceding day. Thereafter, they set fire to a number of Marwaris' and Hindus' houses. On Circular Road, a crowd of Mahomedans, who had collected near the Tram Depot, stopped a motor bus and assaulted the up-country conductor. A Bengali passenger, who came to the latter's assistance, fired a revolver which slightly wounded another passenger, but, nevertheless, had the desired effect of scaring away the mob. A Sikh driver of an Improvement Trust lorry was also dragged from his conveyance and beaten with "lathis" and stabbed. At about 9-30 a.m., a posse of police from Jorasanko police station were heavily stoned by a crowd of Mahomedans, who refused to disperse when ordered to do so, and a constable was somewhat seriously wounded. Shortly after this, a Hindu constable was stabbed at the junction of Harrison Road and Chitpur Road and an unknown Mahomedan was attacked and stabbed by a Hindu mob at the junction of Mullick Street and Cotton Street. Both these men died shortly after their admission into hospital. Two determined attacks were made by the Mahomedans on the Kali Temple at Kalitola, but they were repulsed by a large band of Bengalis, (most of whom were students), who had armed themselves with sticks and "lathis" in order to repulse attacks of this nature. At about 11 a.m. a crowd of Mahomedans broke into the Sikh Temple in Mechuabazar Street and the Sikh Gurudwara in Syed Sally Lane looted, the gold and silver idols and other movable property inside

the Temples, destroyed the religious books, including a copy of the "Granth Sahib," and set fire to the buildings. They also looted and set fire on the Sikh cloth-shops on the ground floor of the Gurudwara in Syed Sally Lane. Information of this incident was conveyed by the Sikhs to a Police picket stationed in Harrison Road, who immediately rushed to the spot and dispersed the mob. The fire was quickly extinguished by the Fire Brigade, but the temple in Mechuabazar Street was again set on fire by the Mahomedans and ultimately had to be guarded by Police. The news of these outrages roused the Sikh community, who live chiefly in Bhowanipur, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that they were restrained by the Police from participating in the rioting. A large party of Sikhs, numbering about 400, succeeded in reaching the scene of the first outrage, but their participation in the hostilities was avoided by placing some of them inside the Temple and sending the remainder back to their homes.

From 10 A.M. onwards, the situation became increasingly grave and, as all the reserves of Police had, by this time, been exhausted, it was decided at about noon to requisition the aid of the Military authorities. A detachment of infantry and two armoured cars were posted on the streets and another detachment was held in reserve for use in emergencies.

Sikh Gurudwara Desecrated

At about mid-day, a mob of Mahomedans entered the Sikh Gurudwara at No. 9, Bagmari Road, and damaged and desecrated the Temple. At about 1 P.M. a large number of Mahomedans invaded the Presidency College grounds and assaulted the Hindu "durwans." Three of them were seriously wounded and one of them, the head "durwan," was so badly wounded that he died in hospital the next day. Shortly after this, a large crowd of about 500 Mahomedans attacked the "Sukumar Bhaban," a Sanskrit School in Baitakhana Road, and drove out the inmates, who escaped over the compound wall. The mob then proceeded to loot and damage the property. At about 2-30 P.M. two Marwaris were stabbed at the junction of Circular Road and Mechuabazar Street, and both subsequently died. Immediately after this incident, a postal mail van was attacked in Mechuabazar Street by a mob of about 200 Mahomedans who stopped the van by placing a dust-bin in front of it and stabbed the Sikh driver so seriously that he died the next day. The Police pickets posted near the spot attempted to intervene, but they were powerless to control the mob, who then proceeded to break open the van with the object of looting the contents. Fortunately a section of the Fire Brigade arrived at this juncture and were able to rescue the mails.

At about 3 P.M. a curious incident occurred; between two and three thousand Mahomedans had collected in front of the Nakhoda Masjid and a lorry containing a number of Mahomedans, who had been rescued from a Hindu quarter by a party of Police and were being escorted for safety, arrived there. Immediately after the rescued persons had descended from the lorry, three shots were suddenly fired at the Police from the Musafirkhana at No. 110, Lower Chitpur Road and a Hindu constable was mortally wounded and died that evening. No clue regarding the identity of the perpetrator of the outrage has yet been obtained and none is expected, and this incident will remain an act of gross treachery which is entirely inexplicable.

At about 4-30 P.M. a Mahomedan was attacked by a Hindu mob on Harrison Road and his left hand was chopped off.

Throughout the day, looting, incendiarism and murder occurred freely, whenever the rioters were out of sight of the Police or Military pickets, and no less than nine other persons were killed during the course of the day, in addition to those mentioned in the foregoing narrative.

By 4 P.M. the situation was more under control and, although the atmosphere was very electric, outbreaks of rioting became fewer in number. A general and continuous panic prevailed in the disturbed area, however; wild rumours abounded, frequent alarms occurred and these combined to produce a situation, in which anything might happen without the slightest warning and which taxed all the efforts of the Police to keep it under control.

During the evening, about 150 up-country Hindus attacked the Sona Pir Dargah at Durga Charan Mitter Street, but, before they could effect any appreciable damage, the police arrived on the scene and dispersed the rioters. The only other important event during the evening was the murder of a Hindu in front of the Y. M. C. A. building in College Street.

A day of Alarm.

April 4th.—At 1-30 p.m. on the 4th, an alarm was raised that the mosque in Welling-ton Square was being attacked, and a number of Mahomedans immediately hastened

towards the spot. Mr. B. N. Banerji, Assistant Commissioner, South District, relying on his influence with the Mahomedans of the locality, by whom he is generally respected, attempted to induce these persons to return to their homes, but the latter paid no heed to him, assaulted him and knocked him down. Fortunately, a party of Police arrived on the scene and rescued the Assistant Commissioner.

Some of the rioters were chased into neighbouring shops and allegations of looting on the part of these constables were subsequently made to the Commissioner. A search was immediately instituted by the Deputy Commissioner, South District, and it is a regrettable fact that certain articles belonging to the shops were found in and immediately outside the building occupied by the constables attached to the Taltolla police station. The property was not found in the exclusive possession of any one of the constables and the latter's version is that the articles had been left there until the officer-in-charge should find time to take charge of them. There is no doubt that the charge of looting is true, and four constables have been dismissed.

At about 8 A.M. rioting broke out at Jagannath Ghat between Mahomedan and Hindu carters, until the latter were dispersed by the Police. The boatmen in that locality also took part in the disturbance and a Hindu was stabbed while he was bathing at the Ghat. At about 11 A.M. the Jain Temple at Belgachia was attacked by the Mahomedans, but the Police were quickly on the scene and dispersed the rioters. Shortly afterwards, a Mahomedan was mortally wounded by a Hindu mob in Shibtolla Street, who also stole a double-barrelled gun belonging to another Mahomedan resident of that locality. During the course of the morning, the mosque in Nimtolla Street was attacked by a Hindu mob, who damaged the building and set it on fire, and, shortly afterwards, a mosque at Poeta in Strand Road was attacked by Hindus and damaged. A posse of Police were quickly despatched and they quelled the disturbance but, doing so, two Hindu constables were injured. At about 1-30 P.M. a riot broke out in Bajabasar and, in the process of dispersing the mob, three other constables were wounded. At about the same time, a serious riot broke out in Eden Hospital Road between Hindus and Mahomedans and brickbats were freely exchanged. The Shiva Temple in that neighbourhood and the Shitalmoni Temple in Prem Chand Boral Street were threatened and the mosques in the compound of the Medical College was attacked by a Hindu mob, but no harm was done in any case. A strong Police force quickly arrived on the scene and dispersed the crowd. At 6 P.M. the Nimtolla mosque was again attacked and set on fire, but the fire was extinguished and the rioters dispersed before much damage could be done. At about 8 P.M. a large crowd of Mahomedans were again going to attack the Jain Temple at Belgachia, but the Police received previous intimation of their intention and a large force was despatched in time to baffle their attempt. At about the same time, a crowd of 300 or 400 low class Hindus demonstrated in front of a house in Maniktolla Street which was partly occupied by Mahomedan tenants and in which some Mahomedan refugees from shops looted in the vicinity had taken sanctuary. The Hindu proprietor of the house directed the mob to disperse and threatened them with a rifle. As they paid no heed to his commands, he fired three blank shots, but this only served to infuriate the mob, who made a determined attack on the house. The proprietor then fired eight ball cartridges from his rifle with the result that four persons were injured, one of whom was seriously wounded.

During the course of the day, two Mahomedans and three Hindus were killed or received mortal injuries, and a large number of shops were looted. A 'majhar' at the junction of Upper Chitpur Road and Baranashi Ghosh Street was entirely razed to the ground and a Hindu Shiva was placed on the site, but this was subsequently removed at the instance of certain influential Hindus of the locality.

State of Panic.

A state of panic prevailed throughout the disturbed area to an even greater degree than on the previous day. Wild rumours flew from mouth to mouth, frequent alarms occurred and business was entirely suspended. Very few people were seen on the streets and all attempts by leaders of communities to restrain their followers still failed to have the slightest effect.

On this date, the Chief Presidency Magistrate issued an order under section 144, Cr. P. C. prohibiting the assembly of more than five persons in any part of the disturbed area, and this order was enforced with effect from 5 p.m. This had a very beneficial effect and removed from the streets the large crowds which had previously collected there and had been productive of so much trouble, but individual cases of assault and disturbances in by-lanes still continued.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BENGAL

During the following night, a small temple of Radha Kissen in Watgunge Street was secretly desecrated by Mahomedan 'Goondas' and this was responsible for a good deal of feeling in the Kidderpore neighbourhood on the following day.

April 5th.—On the 5th April, the rioting extended to the river-side. At about 7-80 a.m. some Hindu carters assaulted a number of Mahomedan boatmen at Nimtollah Ghat and at about 10 a.m. some Hindu Durwans of Messrs. Marshall and Sons assaulted some Mahomedan cane drivers employed in the Port Commissioner's Jetty. At about 11 a.m. on this date about 2,000 Mahomedans, armed with lathis and brickbats, assembled at the junction of Manicktolla and Narkeldanga Main Road and declared that the Police should be attacked, as they were guarding Hindu temples and generally assisting the Hindu combatants. Brickbats were thrown at Inspector J. N. Roy and some constables, four of whom were injured, but a force of soldiers arrived almost immediately under the command of the Assistant Commissioner, North Suburbs, and the crowd dispersed. At about 5 p.m. some five hundred Mahomedan boatmen from boats moored near Babu Ghat attacked the police outpost in the Eden Gardens with lathis and brickbats and, having driven the staff from the building, proceeded to loot the contents. Information was immediately sent to Lall Bazar and a small contingent of Auxiliaries and Police Sergeants soon arrived on the scene in charge of Mr. F. D. Bartley, Deputy Commissioner, Headquarters. The rioters put up a determined opposition to the efforts of the newly arrived patrol to disperse them and the patrol were heavily stoned, but they ultimately succeeded in driving the crowd down the gangway on to the pontoon. On this the rioters took up their stand and continued to shout defiance and to hurl stones at the patrol, whom they repeatedly tried to rush. The patrol thereupon fired and succeeded in dispersing the rioters by this means.

In the disturbed area, the full effect of the Chief Presidency Magistrate's order under section 144, Cr. P. C. began to be appreciated on this date and the day was comparatively uneventful. Some brickbats were thrown into the Taltola police station and some Mahomedans with a herd of cattle were attacked by Hindu rioters on the Strand Road. Sporadic looting and assaults continued, however, and the panic remained undiminished. As a consequence of this, the day was full of false alarms and this fact was not conducive to a speedy return to normality.

Incident Averted.

April 6th.—On the 6th April, a number of incidents occurred, which might easily have developed into very serious situations, but fortunately the Police were, in most instances, on hand in time to prevent serious rioting. Thus, considerable tension arose in Kidderpore, where some Mahomedans threw stones at the Hindu temple in Watgunge Street, which had been desecrated on the previous day, and a number of members of both communities prepared to fight, but the Police arrived before hostilities commenced and dispersed the crowds. Shortly afterwards, a large number of Mahomedans, armed with lathis, collected near the mosque from Hem Chandra Street, but they were quickly dispersed by the Police. Thereafter, a horn or conch-shell was blown from the Pachchanautola temple and Hindus of the locality immediately collected there, out of fear that the temple was about to be desecrated. Mahomedans also arrived in large numbers and both parties were armed with lathis, but the Police were able to disperse the crowd after a brief exchange of brickbats. Again, at about 9 P.M., some 200 Mahomedans attacked the Shiva temple at the junction of Amherst Street and Sitaram Ghosh Street with brickbats and soda water bottles, but a contingent of soldiers and Police were immediately despatched to the spot and the mob was dispersed.

At 11-15 P.M., there was a disturbance in Nikasipara in North Calcutta, because the local Mahomedans feared that a body of Hindus were about to attack the Nikasipara mosque, while the Hindus had collected on receipt of a false rumour that the Mahomedans were about to loot their shops. The Police were immediately on the scene and the mobs were reassured and dispersed.

In two cases, more serious offences were committed. A party of Hindus attacked the mosque in Armenian Street with brickbats, but the disturbance ceased immediately on the arrival of the Police, and a Peshwari beggar was stabbed and killed in Harrison Road by some unknown Hindus.

April 7.—On the 7th April, there was a further decrease in open rioting. Some stones were again thrown at the desecrated temple in Watgunge Street, but further troubles were averted by the Police. A Mahomedan was found dead on Baranashi Ghosh Street, and another Mahomedan was stabbed at Posta by a party of Hindus and died in hospital the same day.

April 8th.—On the 8th April, the situation had still further improved and the only event of importance was the murder of a Mahomedan in Upper Chitpore Road by a party of Hindus.

April 9th to 11th.—On the 9th, one Mahomedan was wounded; on the 10th one Hindu and one Mahomedan; the 11th passed without any reported casualty; on the 12th two Hindus and one Mahomedan were wounded.

Thus ended the sporadic rioting which attended the later stages of the communal strife which began on Good Friday, the 2nd April. The Id-ul-Fitr on the 14th passed off peacefully and most of the troops were withdrawn that evening. The 15th was also without incident and the complete withdrawal of the troops from the streets late that afternoon may be said to mark the conclusion of the first phase of the riots.

It is to be observed that the foregoing narrative is by no means an exhaustive account of the innumerable incidents which occurred during the course of the riots in the various parts of Calcutta. It would be impossible to give a full list of such incidents in the sequence in which they occurred, and the narrative has therefore been confined to a recital of events which serve to convey some appreciation of the course and the character of the riots.

Measures Taken to Quell the Riots.

Information regarding the outbreak of the riots was received by telephone at Lall Bazar at 3-50 p.m. on the 2nd April (Good Friday), and the Armed Police were immediately ordered to stand by. A patrol consisting of 20 Sergeants and 20 Constables from the Reserve Traffic Police under the command of Mr. F. D. Bartley, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Headquarters, was despatched at once to the scene of the outbreak and they were followed very shortly afterwards by another patrol consisting of 1 Inspector and 10 Constables of the Traffic Police. These patrols proceeded at once to quell the original riot and they were reinforced at about 4-30 p.m. by 2 non-Commissioned Officers and 20 Sepoys of the Armed Police, with whose assistance they were enabled to bring the situation under control. By these means all open rioting was stopped for the time being, but sporadic disturbances then broke out in the side streets and by-lanes, and a force consisting of 4 Sergeants and 30 Constables of the Mounted Police was therefore despatched at 5-30 p.m. for patrol duty. At about 7 p.m. the rioting began to extend beyond the scene of the first outbreak to other quarters of the town, and all Traffic Police were therefore withdrawn from posts in the city were held in reserve at Lall Bazar. As the disturbances still continued, at 9 p.m. a force of 40 Constables of the Traffic Police and 10 Sepoys of the Armed Police were despatched to the disturbed area, and at 9-30 p.m. another force, consisting of 24 Sergeants, 7 Head Constables and 70 Constables of the Traffic Police, went out under the command of the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Headquarters. In addition to the above, a number of small patrols were from time to time despatched to various parts of the disturbed area, on receipt of telephone message to the effect that disturbances were taking or about to take place.

At about 10-30 p.m. the situation was comparatively quiet and the majority of the Police were therefore withdrawn, leaving a force of 10 Sergeants and 20 Sepoys of the Armed Police and 2 Sergeants and 15 Constables of the Mounted Police to assist the district police in the disturbed area throughout the night.

At about 8 a.m., on the following day, the 3rd April, rioting again broke out, and during the course of the next two hours a total force of about 150 Police was despatched to reinforce the pickets in the disturbed area. By 10 a.m., general rioting was taking place over a large area and, as the Police pickets were insufficiently mobile, five motor lorries were hired for the purpose of conveying patrols quickly to the place where they were required, and each of these was equipped with a force of 4 Sergeants, 5 Sepoys of the Armed Police and 10 Constables of the Traffic Police. Two of these motor patrols and four motor-cycle patrols, each consisting of 3 Sergeants in a motor-cycle and side-car, patrolled continuously throughout the disturbed area, while three motor patrols and two motor-cycle patrols were held in reserve at Lall Bazar for despatch to dangerous spots on receipt of requisitions by telephone. All possible reserves at the disposal of the Police, including a force of 100 recruits and constables undergoing refresher course at the Police Training College were pressed into service in connection with the riots. By this time, some five to six hundred police were concentrated in the main disturbed area of the North Town and this arrangement continued till the rioting had subsided. The district police in other quarters of the town and suburbs were standing by to deal with sympathetic outbreaks in their jurisdictions and were reinforced from Headquarters where necessary, while all reserves were held in readiness at Lall Bazar.

It soon became manifest, however, that these forces were insufficient and, at about noon, it was found necessary to requisition military assistance. This was readily given

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BENGAL

and a force of 350 officers and men of the North Staffordshire Regiment, and four armoured cars, manned by crews provided by the Calcutta Presidency Battalion were placed at the disposal of the Police. In addition, a light Motor Patrol, consisting of about twenty men with two Lewis guns was provided by the Calcutta Presidency Battalion and a Lewis gun patrol was obtained from the Calcutta Scottish.

On the 4th April, a contingent of one hundred men of the Eastern Frontier Rifles, under the command of Captain L. Y. Bazett, was received from Chinsurah, and twenty Armed Police were lent by the Superintendent of Police, 24-Parganas. This force continued to be employed throughout the period of the riots and, on the 6th April, a further reinforcement of 200 men was obtained from the Eastern Frontier Rifles at Dacca.

A Network of Patrols.

With these reinforcements, it was possible to establish a network of patrols throughout the affected area. Military piquets were stationed at all strategic points throughout the day and night and these were maintained at sufficient strength to furnish constant patrols radiating from the fixed posts and linking up with the neighbouring piquets.

Unarmed parties were sent out regularly from Lal Bazar and from police stations to patrol both the main streets and every side street where trouble had occurred and a number of reconnoitering parties patrolled all the threatening areas throughout the day and night.

The remaining military forces were held in readiness at Lal Bazar, where information of almost all alarms was received by telephone. As necessity arose, they were sent out in flying patrols, under officers from Police Headquarters, to the places from where the alarms were reported. In these cases, they dealt with the situation as they found it on arrival and, when peace had been restored, they returned to Lal Bazar after making local arrangements to prevent any fresh alarm or outbreak of rioting.

From the morning of the 3rd April, there were few collisions between large bodies of the two contending parties, and the great majority of the disturbances were entirely sporadic in character; they subsided as suddenly as they arose, and the difficulties of dealing with the belligerents were greatly enhanced owing to the excellent cover afforded them by the labyrinth of small lanes and gulleys which characterise that portion of the city. The particular feature of this warfare which was most difficult to control was the stabling of individuals by small roving bands of the opposite community, who pounced on their victims without the slightest warning and vanished in a moment. As the assailants in each case immediately sought shelter amongst their co-religionists, it was impossible for a patrol arriving even within a few moments of the occurrence to ascertain whether they had gone or to obtain the slightest clue to their identity. It has been freely suggested that firing should have been resorted to more frequently by the Police, but the foregoing description will serve to show that this suggestion utterly ignores the realities of the situation. The most that could possibly be done was to keep flying patrols continuously operating in the affected area and to search for bad characters and lethal weapons in the gulleys down which the assailants had disappeared.

Throughout the riots, members of the public have frequently complained that fixed piquets did not rush to their assistance when they raised an alarm, but this criticism too is equally uninformed and ignores the many other considerations that determined the conduct of these piquets.

As has been stated elsewhere the first phase of the riots may be said to have closed with celebration of the Id festival on the 14th April on which day the greater portion of the troops were withdrawn; on the following day and on the 16th April the detachments of the Eastern Frontier Rifles were permitted to return to their respective stations.

Effect of Military Forces.

The reinforcement of the Police by Military units had a very beneficial effect on the situation. The appearance of British troops on the streets, and particularly of the armoured cars provided a grim and effective warning to the rioters, which went far from being unheeded, and on innumerable occasions their presence alone was sufficient to disperse menacing crowds.

In addition, however, to their moral effect and to their undoubted effectiveness in quelling actual riots, the mobility of the armoured cars made them of special value to outlying unarmed piquets, with whom they were constantly in touch, and they also formed a valuable reconnoitering unit.

Throughout the first phase of the riots, the armoured cars did excellent work and their utility in dealing with street riots in a town like Calcutta cannot be over-estimated.

The type of car at present used is possibly a little cumbersome and not adapted for narrow streets, but it is of immense use in the broader thoroughfares.

The greatest effect of the military forces was, however, achieved during the process of re-establishing normal conditions in the affected area, and there can be little doubt that the return to comparative normality would not have been achieved within so short a period without the feeling of security which was induced by their presence on the streets.

Communities Participating in the Riots

In the first instance, the rioting was confined to the two communities who first came into conflict, namely, the Mahomedans and the Arya Samajists, but the conflict became almost immediately a struggle between Mahomedans and up-country Hindus. This state of affairs continued until 10 a.m. on the 3rd April, when the Kali Temple at Kalitola was attacked by Mahomedans. This outrage thoroughly roused the Bengali Hindus, who had hitherto taken no part in the struggle and against whom the Mahomedans had displayed no animosity whatsoever, and they took up the cause of their up-country co-religionists. Their part in the struggle was, however, confined almost entirely to the defence of their religious institutions and in only a few instances did they participate in any retaliatory measures.

Casualties among the Public

So far as can be ascertained, the total number of casualties resulting from the rioting which took place between the 2nd and 12th April was 44 deaths and 584 injuries sufficiently serious to warrant admittance into hospital. Of the dead persons, twelve were killed outright, while the remainder died in hospital, and they include 24 Hindus, 19 Mahomedans, and 1 person of doubtful nationality.

The persons admitted to hospital consisted of 327 Hindus, 238 Mahomedans, 1 Anglo-Indian, 2 Jews, and 16 persons whose nationality is not known.

Appended is a statement of the casualties giving the dates on which they occurred :—

Date.	Injured.	Dead
2-4-26	171	...
3-4-26	195	...
•		28
4-4-26	134	...
5-4-26	41	...
6-4-26	17	5
7-4-26	15	4
8-4-26	9	3
9-4-26	1	...
10-4-26	2	...
12-4-26	3	...
	588	40
	—4 died subsequently	4
Total	584	44

It would be unsafe, however, to assume that these figures represent the total casualties resulting from the riots, since a number of dead bodies may have been thrown into the Ganges, a considerable number of injured persons were undoubtedly treated at their homes, instead of being sent to hospital, and a large number of persons were dressed and discharged at the hospitals without any record being kept of their cases.

Police Casualties

The total number of Police casualties amounted to 2 deaths and 91 injuries. The injured persons included Mr. F. D. Bartley, Deputy Commissioner, Headquarters, Mr. B. N. Banerjee, Assistant Commissioner, South District, 1 Inspector, 21 Sergeants, 4 Head Constables, 60 Constables and 3 Sowars.

• Arrests.

The total number of persons arrested in connection with the first phase of the riots is 500, of whom 327 are Mahomedans and 173 Hindus. This figure bears no relation to the number of persons engaged in the riots nor to the number of offences committed, but the difficulties in the way of securing evidence against the rioters are obvious and require

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BENGAL

no comment. Of the persons arrested, 158 were released on personal recognisance to appear on the 30th April for discharge. 347 persons have been sent up for trial and details of the sections of law under which they will be prosecuted are given below :—

Sent up for trial under sections 302, I. P. C., (9 accused in one case and 1 accused in another)—10.

Sent up for trial under sections 147 and 148, I. P. C.—203.

Sent up for trial under sections 457-380, I. P. C.—8.

Sent up for trial under sections 454, I. P. C.—9.

Sent up for trial for minor offences, i.e., sections 29, 54A and 68 of the Calcutta Police Act—117.

Looting.

Throughout the period of the riots, looting of shops was freely resorted to by members of both communities. In many cases, the object was purely to cause damage to a member of the opposing community, but, in many other cases, the motive was plunder by the unruly element of the population, who took prompt advantage of the unsettled conditions in that quarter. The total number of shops looted amounted to 197, of which 106 belonged to Mahomedans and the remaining 91 to Hindus. It has not yet been possible to arrive at even an approximately accurate estimate of the total loss sustained and enquiries in this connection are still being made. While many persons have omitted to give information to the Police regarding the looting of their shops, others have greatly exaggerated their losses and, in these circumstances, it would be unsafe and mis-leading to offer any estimate without further investigation.

Goondas.

An important feature of the riots was the vigorous participation therein by the "goonda" element of the population, who speedily realised the opportunities for looting and violent crime which were offered by the conditions then prevailing and proceeded to take full advantage of these opportunities.

Attack on Religious Institutions.

The most remarkable feature of the riots was the number of religious institutions attacked by members of the opposing communities, and this may be taken as symptomatic of the great animosity existing between the followers of the rival religions. Attacks on Hindu temples have always been a feature of Indian history, although their frequency has decreased very considerably since the British occupation, but they have never occurred in Calcutta, and it would be difficult to find, within recent times, in the whole of India a parallel to the events that have taken place in Calcutta during this outbreak of communal frenzy, since, during the course of seven days, no less than three temples and three gurdwaras were attacked or desecrated and five others were threatened.

Attacks on mosques, however, have not occurred since the beginning of the 18th century (circa 1712 A. D.), when the Sikhs under the leadership of Banda, a 'bairagi' destroyed a number of 'marjids,' in revenge for the destruction by Aurangzeb of Hindu temples. From that date until the present time, destructive attacks on mosques have been practically unknown, but in the present instance five mosques were attacked and attempts were made to attack two others, while attacks were made on three "darjahs, one of which was entirely razed to the ground. These acts of vandalism have unquestionably intensified to an unprecedented degree the bitterness and hatred existing between the two communities, of which they are themselves the symptoms, and it is impossible to say how long this acute antagonism will continue.

A full list of the temples and mosques destroyed or desecrated is given below :—

Temples.

- (1) Shiva Temple at crossing of Zakaria Street and Mandir Street—Twice desecrated.
- (2) Badha Kissen Temple in Watgunge Street. Once desecrated; twice threatened.
- (3) Kali Temple in Cornwallis Street.—Once attacked; thrice threatened.
- (4) Jain Temple in Belgachia Road.—Twice threatened.
- (5) Shiva Temple in Amherst Street—Threatened.
- (6) Paresbnath Temple in Badri Das Temple Street—Threatened.
- (7) Shiva Temple in College Street.—Threatened.
- (8) Sitalamasi Temple in Prem Chand Boral Street.—Threatened.

Gurdwaras.

- (1) Tara Singh Sangat in Meenubazar Street. Desecrated.

(3) Hari Narain Singh Sangat in Syed Sally Lane.—Twice set on fire and three times attacked.

(3) Garudwara in Belgachia Road.—Desecrated.

Mosques

(1) Dinu Chamrawala's Mosque in Harrison Road.—Desecrated.

(2) Massaripatti Mosque in Upper Chitpore Road.—Attacked.

(3) Nintuliah Mosque.—Twice desecrated.

(4) Amposta Mosque at Posta.—Attacked.

(5) Medical College Mosque.—Attacked.

(6) Canning Street Mosque.—Attacked.

(7) Armenian Street Mosque.—Attacked.

Dargahs

(1) Jumma Pir Dargah in Clive Street.—Desecrated.

(2) Sona Pir Dargah in Durga Charan Mitra Street.—Desecrated.

(3) Majhar at crossing of Baranashi Ghosh Street and Upper Chitpore Road.—Destroyed.

Incendiarism.

Another remarkable feature of the riots was the extraordinary degree to which incendiarism was resorted to by the rioters and, there is no doubt that, but for the splendid efforts of the Fire Brigade, an enormous conflagration causing incalculable losses in human life and property would have resulted. Incendiarism has been employed by the conflicting parties in previous disturbances, but the extent to which this means of revenge was employed in the present instance is entirely unprecedented. During the four days ending the 6th April no less than 151 fires were caused by the rioters and, although the resources of the Fire Brigade were considerably strained by this unparalleled call on their services and despite the difficult conditions under which they were frequently called upon to work, the Fire Brigade succeeded in all cases in confining the fires to the premises of origin. The first fire caused by rioters occurred on the 3rd instant and, between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on this date, the Fire Brigade extinguished no less than 51 fires, which probably constitutes a world's record. The control of this extraordinary wave of incendiarism would have been impossible, however, but for the very commendable foresight of the Chief Officer, who, at the first sign of danger, arranged for the maintenance of the maximum pressure of water in all the water mains in the disturbed area and allotted additional machines and staff to the Fire Brigade which received most of the calls.

The method chiefly employed by the incendiaries was to break open a window or a door and to throw into the premises a piece of cloth which had been saturated with kerosine oil and then ignited, but in many instances petrol was poured into the premises and set on fire.

It is interesting to record that although the crowds frequently behaved in a threatening manner when fires, which they had ignited, were being extinguished, they did not interfere except on one occasion when the Fire Brigade were extinguishing a fire in the Jumma Pir Dargah near the junction of Harrison Road and Clive Street. On this occasion, the Fire Brigade were severely stoned, but fortunately only two members of the staff were wounded and their injuries were comparatively slight. In many cases, the Fire Brigade found, on arrival, that people in the premises had been cut off by the flames, but in all cases they arrived in time to rescue these people from danger. In at least three of these cases, the inmates had been actually locked in by the incendiaries. It is difficult to estimate how many lives they were thereby enabled to save, but the number must have been considerable.

Valuable services were also rendered by the Ambulance Department of the Fire Brigade throughout the riots, in conveying wounded persons to hospitals. All the members of the staff were mobilised for duty in connection with the riots and, although they were frequently in positions of considerable danger, they performed their duty with unremitting zeal and were responsible for the safe conveyance of about 400 wounded persons to hospital.

The great efficiency displayed by these two departments and their ability to prove equal to the demands of an unprecedented situation reflect the greatest possible credit on Captain B. A. Westbrook and afford eloquent testimony of his powers of organization.

A material factor in the successful manipulation of the Fire Brigade and the Ambulance Department was the efficient working of the Fire Alarm System, which is maintained in conjunction with the Telephonic Company. Several thousand messages

were transmitted to the Fire Brigade Headquarters, but in no case was there any material delay, and, since any such delay might have resulted in a serious conflagration in cases where fires broke out in congested areas, the thanks of the public are due to the telephone operators for their arduous and efficient work in this connection.

Conduct of Sikhs.

Another feature of the riots, which is worthy of comment, is the conduct of the Sikhs, who throughout the riots conducted themselves with most commendable restraint in spite of considerable and repeated provocation.

The whole Sikh community in Calcutta are to be congratulated on the restraint which they exhibited in the face of such severe provocation, and great credit is due to the leaders for their powers of control and for the very commendable public-spiritedness displayed by them.

On the 13th April, the procession of the Sikhs was forbidden by the Commissioner of Police, in view of the danger of the situation at that time. The Sikhs were far from willing to acquiesce in what they considered to be a further concession to outrageous Mahomedan demands and there was some talk of defying the order, but ultimately saner counsels prevailed and the procession was postponed.

Indian Press.

Possibly the most disappointing feature of the riots, in view of the desire of Government to promote the growth of self-government in India, was the irresponsibility displayed by the Press. So far, indeed from assisting the authorities in controlling the situation, the whole of the vernacular press, in a greater or less degree, devoted their energies to inciting the followers of their respective religions, and to fomenting the existing attitude of disobedience towards the authorities engaged in restoring law and order. Some of the newspapers were admittedly worse than others, but all took full advantage of the absence of any legislation to control their productions and, on the 9th of April, the Honble Member convened a conference of journalists, for the purpose of impressing on them their duties in regard to the riots. This Conference had a salutary effect but almost all the vernacular press continued their former propaganda, though in a subdued degree. Their chief offences were the publication of false or one-sided reports of incidents, which were calculated to incite their readers to retaliatory acts, unbridled criticism of the action taken to suppress the riots, which was calculated to promote general disaffection towards the executive authorities, and the publication of inflammatory leaflets issued by the opposite community. It is impossible to over-emphasise the danger of this form of propaganda, since the majority of the persons engaged in the rioting are almost wholly illiterate and derive their information from the newspapers which a few of their number are able to read aloud to them, and the natural result is that they are spoon-fed with highly sensational and extremely biased reports which they are only too ready to believe.

Leaflets.

Towards the conclusion of the first phase of the riots both the contending factions began to indulge in a highly mischievous and dangerous form of propaganda by means of anonymous leaflets which advocated the commission of murder and other acts of violence, in retaliation for the excesses committed by the opposing party. These leaflets have been very numerous and have taken a variety of forms such as notices, 'fatwas' and communiques regarding incidents or defining the general situation. They have been published in almost all the languages employed in Calcutta, and even the less dangerous types, such as the pamphlets issued by the various Relief Committee's explaining the functions of these Committees, in connection with the riots, have played an important part in exacerbating the existing tension between the two communities.

Defence Parties.

Immediately after the outbreak of attacks on religious institutions on the 8th April, proposals were made to organise defence parties for the protection of Hindu temples. Some defence parties were actually formed, notably the "Bray Club" in the jurisdiction of the Bartola police-station, the South Calcutta Defence Force under the presidency of Mr. S. N. Halder, and another band of Bengali youths, who, under the leadership of Pulin Das, Nanda Ghosh and Nera Ghosh, defended the Kali temple in Kalitola.

Early in the riots, the Commissioner of Police was approached by Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, Mayor of Calcutta, with a proposal that the latter should organise volunteer defence parties for the protection of mosques and temples and to assist in the work of restoring order. In discussing this proposal, the Commissioner explained to Mr. Sen Gupta the necessity, firstly, for recruiting these volunteers equally from both commu-

nities and, secondly, for their enrolment as "special constables" under the control of the Police authorities. Mr. Sen Gupta expressed considerable doubt regarding his ability to provide the necessary Mahomedan contingent and, in subsequent correspondence with the Commissioner, made it clear that in no case could he sanction the subordination to official control of any volunteer recruited by him. In the special circumstances existing at present, the employment of such independent bodies would be fraught with many obvious and serious dangers and Mr Sen Gupta's attitude made it impossible to pursue the matter any further. Attempts are still being made by the Police, in co-operation with prominent Hindu and Mahomedan gentlemen, to organise mixed defence parties of properly enrolled volunteers. Apart, however, from the difficulties of recruitment, it is impossible to say, without experience, how far such volunteers could be usefully employed in a communal disturbance.

It has been alleged that the refusal of the Commissioner of Police to recognise un-enrolled volunteers deprived the public of a certain measure of protection. This contention, however, entirely ignores the obvious dangers inherent in the employment of bodies of men liable to be swayed by communal feeling and entirely divorced from effective control. These dangers so greatly outweigh the advantage of such protection as might have been afforded by these volunteers that the allegation carries its own refutation.

Exodus of Members of the Public from Calcutta.

Even in the early days of the riots, the panic in the disturbed area was so great that a number of people left their residence for other localities and, from the 3rd instant until after the conclusion of the riots, there was a daily exodus of people of all classes from the portion of Calcutta. Generally speaking, the Marwaris and the Hindus intended that their departure should be purely temporary and proceeded to their garden houses or to the houses of their friends outside the disturbed area, until such time as it should be possible for them to return. Many Mahomedans, however, have left the city with the intention of remaining absent for some considerable time and have returned to their original homes. It is impossible to compute, even approximately, the number of persons who have thus left their homes in Calcutta, either temporarily or permanently, but it is safe to say that their numbers have run into many thousands.

This report would be incomplete without some reference to the adverse criticism which has been freely levelled against the Police by all sections of the community. Criticism of this character is not lacking, even in normal times, and from the very nature of the riots, it was only to be expected that there would be an outburst of unbridled criticism, since the Police were required to hold the balance between two violently opposed factions, whose members were blinded to all reason by religious prejudice and were impatient of any sort of control.

It must, nevertheless, be admitted that, in the nature of things the great preponderance of Hindus in the force, whether officers or constables, does afford some ground for the apprehensions of the Mahomedans that, in a communal crisis of this nature, Police measures may be conducted in a partisan spirit. It would, however be grossly untrue to assert that this spirit has influenced, to any appreciable extent, the general conduct of the Police in the present riots. It would be too much to expect that individual members of the force should not entertain sympathies for their co-religionists engaged in the struggle or that, in a force, numbering some 5,000 officers and men, these sympathies should not influence their actions in some isolated cases, but, generally speaking, it can be fairly maintained that the members of the force have subordinated their personal feelings to their sense of duty and have conducted themselves with most commendable impartiality in extremely trying circumstances.

The general body of criticism has been so vague and general in character that it has been impossible to undertake any investigation into the great majority of the allegations levelled against the Police, either individually or collectively. Such of the allegations, however, as have been supported by evidence are being carefully examined by responsible officers, but, in almost all instances, these allegations are found to be entirely baseless. The delay in examining these charges is due, firstly, to their vagueness, and, secondly, to the fact that practically the whole Police force have been continuously and fully engaged in quelling the riots.

Mention has already been made of the one outstanding case, in which it has been found that constables were guilty of removing articles from shops which had been looted. These constables have been dismissed, in default of sufficient evidence to warrant criminal prosecution.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BENGAL

As against this instance of a true allegation, the following may be quoted in illustration of the baseless charges which have been so freely levelled against the force, even by persons of public prominence and high position :—

On the 4th April Mr. H. S. Subhawardy, Deputy Mayor of Calcutta, personally complained to the Commissioner that the Police and the Military had that day looted a shop at No. 87, Kengrapati, Burra Bazar. The Assistant Commissioner of the Detective Department (Mr. Hartley) and Inspectors Robertson, Malins, and P. N. Mukherjee, all of the Detective Department, were immediately deputed to accompany Mr. Subhawardy to the scene of the alleged occurrence. A full enquiry was held without delay and it was found that the charge was entirely baseless. The shop in question was intact and a large number of the local residents testified that no looting whatever had taken place in that particular locality that day. The Assistant Commissioner found, however, that two cloth-shops, at No. 47, Kengrapati, had been looted on the previous day, but an eye-witness of the occurrence, who was produced by Mr. Subhawardy, declared that no Police or Military were in the locality when the looting took place.

The Second Phase of the Riot, 22nd April—9th May.

Shortly before 1 p.m. on the 22nd April, rioting again broke out throughout the disturbed area. The immediate occasion was a brawl between some Hindus and Muhammadans near the junction of Mechna Bazar Street, Cotton Street and Upper Chitpur Road. Considerable uproar and excitement followed on the heels of this incident and all important shops in Chitpur Road and Cotton Street were immediately closed. The Deputy Commissioner, North District, the local police and a force consisting of 1 Inspector, 6 Sergeants 10 sepoy of the Armed Police and 10 constables were quickly on the scene and the rioting was immediately put down. Two of the drunken Muhammadans who participated in the brawl were arrested and the crowds were dispersed.

The atmosphere in the disturbed area continued to be very uncertain even after the conclusion of the first phase of the riots and a force had accordingly been kept permanently posted on all important crossings to patrol that area both day and night. When the second phase of the riots broke out on the 22nd April, therefore, the district police under the command of Mr. H. C. Hunt, Deputy Commissioner, North District, who was immediately on the scene, were enabled to cope with the initial outbreak. Reinforcements were, however, immediately rushed out from Lall Bazar, on receipt of a telephonic message from one of the armed pickets. Strong pickets were posted at all important junctions and a reserve force was stationed at Burra Bazar thana. When the rioting began to spread beyond the scene of the original disturbance, further measures were adopted and by 2 p.m. all available reserves had been mobilised and every possible precaution taken. In addition to the pickets stationed on all important crossings, fifty men from the North Division, Port Police, had been drafted into Harrison Road: motor lorries had been hired, and motor patrols put into operation, and the whole of the Traffic Police, Armed Police and Mounted Police had been recalled from their normal duties and made to stand by at Lall Bazar.

In view, however, of the number of by-lanes and gulleys with which that part of Calcutta is honeycombed this force was unable to prevent the commission of isolated assaults which then began to occur. Other contingents of force were added later from Dacca and other places.

Moreover, the large number of individual assaults, which particularly characterised the second phase of the riots, required the establishment of an even closer network of patrols than previously and it was essential that as many as possible of these should be in charge of persons capable of exercising initiative. The decision to retain their services for a period of three months has been arrived at in consideration, firstly, of their moral effect and secondly, of the grave possibility of further outbreaks of rioting within this period, and particularly on the occasions of the "Bakr-Id" and "Muharram."

Communities Participating in the Riots

As in the case of the first phase the rioting was confined almost entirely to the Muhammadans and up-country Hindus. The Bengali Hindus participated to a greater degree than in the first phase, but generally speaking, they remained on the defensive. The Sikh community remained completely aloof from the struggle and in only one isolated incident did a member of this community participate.

THE CALCUTTA RIOTS

83

Casualties among the Public

No less than 66 persons were killed, or died as a result of injuries received, during the second phase of the riots and 391 persons were so seriously wounded as to warrant their admission into hospitals. The dead persons included 30 Hindus, 31 Muhammadans and 5 persons of doubtful nationality, while the persons admitted into hospital consisted of 172 Hindus, 218 Muhammadans and 6 persons whose nationality is not known.

It is unlikely that these figures represent the total casualties resulting from the rioting which occurred between the 22nd April and 3rd May.

Police Casualties

The casualties amongst the Calcutta Police force were comparatively slight and consisted of one death and four serious injuries. A number of other officers received minor injuries, but they were not admitted into hospitals and their cases have not been included.

Arrests

The total number of persons arrested during the second phase of the riots was 567, of whom 398 were Muhammadans and 169 Hindus. A large number of these had to be discharged for lack of evidence, but 360 persons, including 272 Muhammadans and 88 Hindus, were sent up for trial.

Individual Assaults

The chief characteristic of the second phase of the riots was the very large number of attacks on individuals by small roving bands of the opposite faction. These assaults were, almost without exception, committed in apparently deserted streets, out of sight of the police, and frequently just after a police patrol had passed and, in view of this fact and of the difficulties attaching to the control of the form of crime which have been indicated in the report on the first phase of the riots, many of the assailants succeeded in escaping the legal liabilities of their action. Such methods as were possible, however, were adopted. "Goondas" and other persons known to be addicted to this form of crime were rounded up and prosecuted whenever evidence subsequently proved available, and the localities in which the assaults were committed were raided immediately afterwards for suspicious persons and for illegal weapons. As is apparent from the narrative, these measures ultimately achieved their desired effect and the numbers of assaults decreased in proportion to the increase in the number of arrests.

Looting

Instances of looting, however, were considerably less frequent than in the first phase of the riots, and throughout the whole period of the second phase, only 21 cases of looting occurred. In some of these cases, the premises were deserted at the time when they were looted and the extent of the damage caused, therefore, is difficult to compute; whereas in other cases, the value of the property looted was almost certainly exaggerated. The difficulty of obtaining even an approximately accurate estimate of the total damage still remains, therefore. But it is improbable that the figure was less than Rs. 10,000.

"Goondas"

As in the first phase, the "goonda" element of the population participated freely in the rioting, and the fact that all the available police were fully occupied in the suppression of open rioting and other acts of violence made it difficult to deal with them effectively. Such of the "goondas" as came actively to notice during the riots were, of course, arrested and where evidence was sufficient, were placed on trial but the leaders and the main body of the "goondas" still remained.

Despite great difficulties, however, forty-eight bad characters including several of the most notorious "goonda" leaders in Calcutta, were arrested, of whom twenty-five were proceeded against under the Goondas Act or were prosecuted under the ordinary law while forty-three others were elected to leave Calcutta.

Attacks on Religious Institutions

It is gratifying to record that the series of attacks on religious institutions, which formed the most remarkable feature of the first phase of the riots, was not repeated during the second period.

Incendiarism

Instances of incendiarism were also strikingly less frequent than in the first phase of the riots, and the total number of fires during the second period which can be definitely

attributed to the rioters was fifteen only. In no case did the fires assume serious proportions and they were quickly extinguished by the Fire Brigade. The Ambulance Department also had considerably less to do than in the first phase and the total number of calls made on them was 172.

Allegations Against Police.

Four separate complaints were lodged in court on the 17th May by Muhammadan residents of Mechua Bazar, accusing Inspector B. D. Khosla of Sukea Street police-station of the commission of murder, trespass and assault on the morning of the 27th April, shortly after the murder of Head Constable Bharat Roy. Three of these complaints were lodged before Mr. A. Z. Khan, Additional Chief Presidency Magistrate, who after a preliminary enquiry summoned the Inspector for trial, and all three cases are still pending. The fourth complaint, which accused the Inspector of murder and trespass, was lodged before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, who after examining the complainant's witnesses, dismissed the charge as being palpably false and a deliberate attempt to implicate the Inspector.

Charges under sections 448 and 824, Indian Penal Code, were also preferred against Sub-Inspector M. S. A. Ahmed, of Burra Bazar police station by a Marwari "benia," and this case is at present being tried by the Chief Presidency Magistrate.

Scavenging by Bengali Boys.

One of the worst features of the second phase of the riots was the almost entire suspension, for a number of days, of the conservancy arrangements in the disturbed area, in consequence of the fear of the Hindu sweepers and scavengers that they would be attacked by Mahomedans during the performance of their duties. The interruption of these arrangements threatened a serious general epidemic and remedial measures speedily became imperative. As soon as they asked for them, the Corporation authorities were furnished with police guards to protect such of their scavenging staff as could be persuaded to go out and the menace was successfully averted. In certain instances, Bengali youths displayed commendable public spirit by voluntarily assisting in removing refuse.

The Bengal Pact Controversy.

The Krishnagore Conference held almost on the morrow of the Calcutta riots came to an abrupt end as the consequence of Mr. Sasmal's resignation of the presidentship and Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, declaring the Conference dissolved. This, however, did not prevent a section of the delegates opposed to the continuance of the Hindu Muslim Pact, concluded by the late Mr. C. R. Das, from immediately holding a meeting under Mr. J. Chaudhury's chairmanship and annulling the Pact. (See p. 417).

Loyal to his late chief, Mr. Sen Gupta was against such an annulment. He issued a circular to the members of the B. P. C. C., calling an emergent meeting on the 13th June and stating that some among the Executive Council Members of the B. P. C. C. were actively working against the Pact and for that reason he urged the Committee to elect another Executive Council which would co-operate with him. This circular, however, evoked columns of replies from the members, particularly of the Opposition, one of whom interpreted Mr. Sen Gupta's anxiety to retain the Pact as merely a device to snatch a few Muslim votes for the Swarajya Party at the coming elections which would not be available if the Pact were rescinded. Mr. Sen Gupta's opponents maintained that the suspension of the Pact pending the settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question on an All-India basis, will go a long way to reassure the Hindu feeling. Mr. Upendranath Banerji, one of the anti-Pactists, in an open letter to Mr. Sen Gupta, took strong exception to the latter's charge of disloyalty levelled at "the very men who put the triple crown on your head and helped to make you what you are" (meaning the Mayoralty, Leadership of the Bengal Swarajists and Presidentship of B. P. C. C.).

The B. P. C. C. Meeting.

The general meeting of the B. P. C. C. was held at the Indian Association Hall, Calcutta on Sunday the 13th instant. It was a record gathering, for out of 319 members about 250 members including 30 Mahomedans attended the meeting. Such an attendance did not take place in the course of last four years.

Mr. J. M. SEN GUPTA, the President of the B. P. C. C., arrived punctually and he was supported by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the President of the Indian National Congress who sat on the left and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad sat on the right.

The President in opening the proceedings referred to the circular he had issued to the members of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. He said he had done it after much thought. Recent events had conclusively proved to him as well as to many of his colleagues that if the work of the Congress in Bengal, particularly the forthcoming election, were to be carried to a successful issue then they must set their house in order. It was idle to deny that people who had no faith in the present programme of the Congress were working while remaining inside the Congress organisation, against its policy as laid down in the Cawnpore Congress. The Bengal Hindu-Muslim

Pact, which formed an integral part of the Congress Programme of the province and on which the success of the coming election greatly depended, was jeopardised by a section of the Provincial Congress Committee. In view of all these he appealed to the members to address themselves seriously to the agenda before them and to carry on the proceedings with dignity, decorum and tolerance.

The Secretary then read a telegram he had received from Pandit Moti Lal Nehru who was unable to come on account of his bad health.

The Secretary having read that telegram, the President then ruled that the resolution of Mr. Lalit Mohan Das regarding the meeting held at Krishnagar under Mr. J. Chowdhury as President should come first.

Syed Majid Bux objected to this but he was over-ruled. Mr. Lalit Mohan DAS then moved the following resolution :—

The Krishnagar Conference.

"Be it resolved that considering the present critical political situation in the country and the urgent need of united and whole-hearted action on the part of Congress members, this meeting of the B.P.C.C. do not think it desirable to discuss the question whether the meeting held under the presidency of Mr. J. Chowdhury at Krishnagar at the Bengal Provincial Conference Hall on May 23 was a meeting of the Bengal Provincial Conference.

Mr. Upendra Nath Banerjee supported the resolution. Mr. Nagendra Nath Sen of Khulna also supporting. The motion was declared carried by show of hands.

When the next resolution was about to be taken up certain members requested the President to put the previous resolution to vote again, their complaint being that they were misled in the first instance. They further stated that they demanded a poll which ought to have been given.

Mr. Mrinal Kanti Bose objected to the procedure.

The President however in deference to the wishes of these members, put the motion to vote again and declared it carried when Mr. Nurul Huq Chaudhuri demanded a poll.

The poll was granted with the result that 128 voted for the motion and 118 against.

At this stage, on enquiry from the Secretary, the President stated that there were only 230 members' signature on the attendance register but the counting showed 246. So he would take votes again and every member should record his vote by rising in his place when his name is called by the Secretary of the B. P. C. C.

Then, after the Secretary had begun to call the names from the attendance register, some members wanted to deposit their membership fees. But the President ruled that subscriptions must not be taken as polling had already begun. He also directed that subscription could be given before the next polling. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chatterjee asked the President to stop polling for a few minutes and to allow payment of subscription but the President could not accede to this request as votes were already being recorded.

While names were being called by the Secretary and votes were being recorded a gentleman who recorded his vote for Mr. L. Das's motion in the name of an absent member was detected and was compelled to leave the meeting.

After votes on all the members present were recorded the motion was declared lost, 103 voting for and 135 against it.

Then Dr. Mohini Mohan DAS moved :—

“That in the opinion of the B. P. C. C. the meeting presided over by Mr. J. Chowdhury on Sunday, the 23rd May, at Krishnagar, was not a meeting of the Bengal Provincial Conference, and that there should not be any further session of the Bengal Provincial Conference this year.”

Mr. K. S. Roy seconding asserted that Mr. Chowdhury was not a delegate and therefore the meeting presided over by him was not a meeting of the Bengal Provincial Conference.

The name of Mr. Chaudhuri did not appear in the list of delegates submitted by the Reception Committee.

Mr. Satcowripati Roy, as Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, vouched for the same and said that he did not issue any delegation certificate in the name of Mr. Chaudhuri.

Mr. Bhagwati Shome referring to rule 10 of the Bengal Provincial Conference contended that Mr. Chowdhury was an ex-officio delegate by virtue of his being elected president by the delegates. Therefore no question about his election could be raised now.

Mr. Nurul Huq Chaudhuri :—Mr. J. Chowdhury was not a delegate and how could he find his way into the meeting of the delegates ?

Mr. Mrinal Kanti BOSE said that if Mr. Chowdhury was not a delegate how was it that he was allowed to take part in the proceedings of the delegates at which Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta presided ? The fact that no objection was raised then showed that he was a delegate and the question had been raised now simply because the pact had been rescinded by the conference presided over by Mr. Chowdhury. There was also no substance in the contention that Mr. Chowdhury's name did not appear on the list of delegates elected by the Reception Committee. Citing the Rules Mr. Bose said that while the Congress Committees had to apply lists of delegates to the B.P.C.C. Secretary, the Reception Committee was not so required. The Rules also stated that delegates alone could take part in the proceedings. Mr. Chowdhury was allowed to speak at the meeting of the delegates several times and raised many legal and constitutional questions. Why no objection was taken to his taking part in the proceedings either by the Secretary of the B.P.C.C. or anybody else ? He maintained that the election of Mr. Chowdhury as president was perfectly legal and the way Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta had interpreted rules only misled the public.

Mr. Jogesh Chandra DAS GUPTA said that the issue to be determined were three, namely, (1) If the president abruptly left the meeting what would happen, (2) whether Mr. Chowdhury was rightly elected president and (3) whether the proceedings were valid. Mr. Das Gupta submitted that even if the election of Mr. Chowdhury as president was not valid, it did not vitiate the proceedings and in this instance he quoted the proceedings of the Bengal Council where election of members had been declared void but this did not nullify the whole proceedings.

Mr. S. N. Biswas emphasised that under the rules no one who was not a delegate could take part in the proceedings.

The closure was then moved and adopted, and the resolution was carried by a majority.

The Hindu-Muslim Pact.

Mr. S. N. BISWAS next moved:—

"That in the opinion of the B.P.C.C. it should not now consider the question of rescission, revision or modification of the Hindu-Moslem Pact of Bengal having regard to the present state of feeling in the country."

He said that as by rescinding the pact they would be wounding the feelings of the Mahomedans and by reaffirming it they stood in danger of incurring the opprobrium of the Hindus, it was better that they as members of the Congress should, whatever their personal feelings be, adopt an attitude of neutrality. As regards any question of revising the Pact it should be considered on an All-India basis and should be left to the Indian National Congress for consideration.

Mr. Anandamohan Chowdhury of Jessore seconded.

A m e n d m e n t s M o v e d .

Mr. Lalit Mohan DAS moved by way of amendment that, whereas according to the first clause of the preamble of the Bengal Pact its provisions are to take effect when the foundation of self-government is secured, and whereas there is a tension of feeling between the Hindus and Mahomedans at the present moment which prevents calm and dispassionate consideration, this meeting do not think it desirable to reconsider the question of the Pact at present.

The amendment fell through for want of a seconder.

Mr. S. K. Roy CHOWDHURY moved another amendment that all discussions regarding the Hindu-Moslem Pact be postponed till the next session of the Indian National Congress.

Mr. Upendra Nath BANERJI opposing the resolution said that they had been asked not to raise the question of the Pact, but they had not been told the why and wherefore. From his conversation with several members he came to know that although they held that they did not believe in this Pact they would support it all the same. Why this duplicity, why this attempt to avoid the discussion of the Pact? If they held that the Pact had no utility whatsoever, why this hesitation not to declare it so? On the other hand if they desired to stick to the Pact let them re-affirm it and go out and ask the Hindus to stop music before mosques.

Proceeding Mr. Banerji said there was no denying the fact that the relation between the two communities was most strained at present. Believers as they were in Hindu-Moslem unity it was now time for them to consider how best to bring about that unity without which the establishment of Swaraj would remain a dream. He, therefore, proposed that the matter should be left to the All-India Congress Committee to consider on an All-India basis. It would serve no useful purpose to avoid the question and it would not advance the country's cause by a jot or a tittle. They should sit together and find out a solution of the difficulty. For the sake of Hindu-Moslem unity and in the name of the country he requested the mover to withdraw the resolution.

Another amendment by Mr. S. C. BOSE was ruled out of order as being in direct opposition to the original motion. Mr. Bose's amendment was to the effect that the Bengal Pact being a dead letter as evidenced by the recent Hindu-Moslem disturbances in Calcutta and in different parts

of this presidency it was unnecessary in the opinion of the B.P.C.C. to consider the question of rescission, revision or modification of the Pact.

The PRESIDENT remarked that to say that the Pact was a dead letter was really a consideration of the Pact which was against the spirit of the original motion and ruled the amendment out of order.

Mr. Gour M. ROY moved for the addition of the sentences after the original resolution that "and it recommends that the question be considered at the next session of the Indian National Congress at Gauhati." He said this had been the opinion of Pandit Motilal Nehru and they should carry it into effect.

Mr. Mrinal Kanti BOSE spoke from his experience as a journalist that Hindu Bengal and even many among thoughtful Mahomedans were opposed to the Pact. The Pact allowed music to stop before mosques at all times. And every day they get letters by shoals from correspondents in the mofussil—many of them members of the B.P.C.C. itself—to disprove the contention of Mr. Ghaznavi that music is always stopped before mosques. "If you vote for this motion, i.e., if you would retain the Pact please don't write such letters to newspapers." "Be consistent and sincere in your vote and act"—said Mr. Bose. This Pact, Mr. Bose continued, was at the root of present dissensions and strife. Even Dr. Kitohlew had admitted it. It had been found that the more they were trying to get the Mahomedans to their side by pacts and compromises, the greater was the estrangement between the two communities. Even Maulana Mahomed Ali said so at the Cocanada session of the Congress. When Desh-bandhu made the Pact he believed that by it Hindu-Moslem unity would be assured. Had he lived to-day he would have admitted his error and abandoned the Pact and explored for a more stable foundation of unity. Therefore they must remove the pact and broad base Swaraj on a surer foundation, that of nationalism.

Sj. Amarendra Nath CHATTERJEE quoted the testimony of Pandit Motilal and said that if Swaraj was to depend on pacts and compromises, they must wash their hands clean out of it. He asked the members not to practice self-deception. What was the good of saying, he asked, that as Congress members they were neither Hindus nor Mahomedans? The fact remained that in this way they were establishing communalism instead of nationalism. They must look to the interest of the country and not to the interest of a section. They should try to convert Musalmans by love and truth and not by bribes such as by giving them services. Could not Musalmans think of Swaraj like Hindus? Could not they be actuated by the same patriotism? Let not Musalmans forget their honour. They wanted unity of two communities and not shilly-shally Pacts. To achieve this let them go to villages and serve Mahomedans as well as untouchables with a view to raise them. A new situation would have arisen if the Musalmans condemned desecration of temples. Election was coming. What had they got to say to the Hindus? Time had come to decide the issue and let the matter be referred to the All-India Congress Committee.

Motion Carried.

After Mr. Chatterjee's speech closure was moved and adopted. The two amendments were moved and lost and that of Mr. Biswas carried. A

poll was demanded with the result that the original motion was carried by 153 to 88 votes.

The president then intimated that by the passage of the former resolution all other resolutions on the Pact automatically dropped.

Dissolution of the Executive.

Mr. Kiran Sankar ROY moved that the present executive of the B.P.C.C. be dissolved.

Mr. Jogesh Ch. Das Gupta on a point of order enquired whether under the rules such a resolution was in order. The President ruled that it was in order.

Mr. Roy said that he did not mean this resolution as a reflection or vote of censure on their executive. There were certain members he said who were against the Cawnpore programme and therefore the executive should be reconstituted. He emphasised that this was not a move against the ex-revolutionaries.

Mrs. Urmilla Devi seconded the motion.

Mr. Suresh Chandra DAS opposing said that this resolution was based on the circular of Mr. Sen Gupta. He submitted individual members had every right to give expression to their views. He thought, the resolution was the outcome of the motion submitted at the Conference on the Bengal Pact. It was a zulum practised on them because they were anti-pactists. But it should be noted that the pact was a local affair. In these circumstances he challenged Mr. Sen Gupta to prove their "flagrant breach of loyalty to the Congress," when they were prepared to give their support to the Cawnpore Congress programme. They were even prepared to give Mr. Sen Gupta every opportunity to run the election, but now they must be got rid of. He further stated that the Congress workers had practically become canvassers, for they had no other programme except Council election. He asked the other side to prove their allegations, be they private or public, and not to have recourse to vague charges.

Mr. Wahed HUSSAIN said that the purpose behind the resolution was to get whole-hearted support to the present programme of the Congress and not to drive out inconvenient workers. Incidentally he said that the Hindu-Muslim Pact was not insisted upon by the Mahomedans, and speaking for himself he joined the Congress not in a spirit of bargain and he would remain in it so long he lived, pact or no pact.

Mr. Atul SEN regretted that insinuation had been made that the members of the B. P. C. C. Executive had been disloyal to the president. He challenged anyone to cite a single instance where they had violated a single mandate of the Congress. He asserted that the Executive had followed the Congress mandate in toto. If some of them wanted to rescind the pact it was because they desired to give vent to the natural feelings of the people after the Calcutta riots and because they felt that the Swaraj party if they swore by the pact would stand in danger of losing 50 Hindu seats in the Bengal Legislative Council.

Mr. Purushottam ROY warned the house against dissolving the Executive Council. It would be an evil day for Bengal if the present workers were removed from the Congress Executive.

Mr. Mrinal Kanti BOSE thought that a dangerous precedent would be created if the present Executive was dissolved for the supposed remissness of a few. He did not know if the majority of the members of the Executive Councils were opposed to the President. If that was so, it was the duty of the President to resign and leave it to the B.P.C.C. to consider whether it would have the President or the Executive Council. If, however, only a minority of the members of the Executive Council did not share the views of the President on certain matters, there was absolutely no difficulty to carry on the President's policy and programme. "It was an unheard of thing," said Mr. Bose, "to dissolve the whole Executive for the alleged disloyalty of a few." Even these few, Mr. Bose said, was not at all disloyal to the Congress programme but they were opposed on the Pact which the Congress had rejected and in this attitude they reflected the views of the country more correctly than the President and his supporters.

Mr. Kiran Sankar ROY replying said that the reason why they could not postpone the reconstitution of the Committee was that the general election was near at hand. In his opinion the work before them during the next four months was to canvass votes for the Council. However trifling the matter might appear to be to others it was in his opinion the only work before them at least till November next. In the Executive Committee there were men who held other views and that was why a dissolution was essential.

Referring to the Karmi-sangha Mr. Roy said that although it was a new body its decisions had become almost mandatory. Therefore if they wanted to continue the Council programme of the Congress the present Executive should be dissolved.

Mr. J. M. Sen GUPTA, the President, addressing the meeting said that his grievance against the present Council was that certain of its members had recently formed themselves into an association styled "Karmi-sangha" who had been trying to force their decision on the B.P.C.C. that some of the principal workers had no faith in the Congress-Council programme. They had been talking about that the Swarajist programme was no programme in that it did not countenance the acceptance of office. He charged the workers with having allied themselves with the Independent and Nationalist parties. In face of all these it had, he said, become impossible for him to work with the present executive. All that he wanted was that he should be allowed to work unhampered and in that view he proposed a dissolution of the whole council. He wanted to make clear that he had nothing to say against ex-revolutionaries. Any one believing in the Council programme of the Congress in toto, whether he was an ex-revolutionary or not, was welcome to the new Council. With the present members of the Council, some of them having definite anti-Pact view, it was impossible for him to continue the Congress work any longer. It was not a threat, emphasised Mr. Sen Gupta, but was rather an expression of conviction in him that the Pact was the very foundation upon which the Congress Work in Bengal, and for the matter of that, of the whole of India depended.

The resolution was carried by a majority. As the result of the voting was announced a very large number of delegates including the members of the Karmi-sangha left the house in a body. The new Council was then reconstituted. Thirty members were elected, one from each district, and Mr. Sen Gupta, the President, was empowered to nominate the remaining thirty.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BENGAL

Mrs. Urmila Devi then brought a motion expressing confidence of the B.P.C.C. in Mr. Sasmal. The motion was withdrawn on an appeal made by Mrs. Naidu. The Conference was then adjourned till the next day.

The Adjourned Meeting.

The adjourned meeting of the B. P. C. C. took place on the next day, the 14th March at the committee's office. The following resolutions were passed without any dissension :—

1. That this Provincial Congress Committee recommends to the A. I. C. C. to take measures to convene a special session of the Congress to consider the present Hindu-Moslem differences and to devise measures to compose it.

2. This meeting of the B. P. C. C., deplors the desecration of Temples and Mosques and urges upon the Leaders of both the communities to take steps to prevent the commission of such outrages on places of worship in future.

3. This meeting of the B. P. C. C. requests its Hindu and Moslem members to publish a joint manifesto with separate declarations over their signatures deprecating the desecration of the places of worship and other acts of violence in different parts of Bengal.

4. This Committee deplors the communal feeling that has arisen between the Hindus and Mahomedans in Bengal and is of opinion that unless good feeling is restored between these two Communities and unless they work together for Swaraj it is impossible to attain it.

For the reasons stated above it is resolved that several batches, each consisting of Hindu and Mahomedan members of the B. P. C. C. should go out at once to the different parts of Bengal to preach amongst the people the necessity of the unity between Hindus and Mahomedans for the purpose of attaining freedom.

Following members with others to be selected by the Secretary will form such party.

1. President of the B. P. C. C.
2. Secretary of the B. P. C. C.
3. Sj. Lalit Mohan Das.
4. Sj. B. N. Sasmal.
5. Moulana A. K. Azad.
6. Moulvi Syed Jalaluddin Hashemy.
7. Moulvi Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chowdhury.
8. Moulvi Haji Abdul Rashid Khan.
9. Dr. Mohini Mohan Das.
10. Sj. Amarendra Nath Ghosh.
11. Sj. Surendra Nath Biswas.
12. Sj. Basanta Kumar Mazumdar.
13. Sm. Hema Prava Mazumdar.

5. Having regard to certain misleading and incomplete reports in reference to a resolution of confidence in Mr. Sasmal appearing in to-day's newspapers, it is resolved that a statement be issued by the Secretary that the resolution of confidence in Mr. Sasmal moved by Sm. Urmila Devi was withdrawn on Mrs. Naidu's and the President's appeal after the whole house without a single exception had agreed that they had complete confidence in him as a recognised Leader and as a self-sacrificing worker and that such a resolution was unnecessary.

All other resolutions were withdrawn.

The Congress Karmi Sangha's Manifesto.

Some of the Congress Workers in Bengal who were excluded from the Executive Council of the B. P. C. C. meeting published a manifesto stating their grievances as well as their aims and objects. The manifesto was

issued on behalf of the Congress Karmi Sangha over the signatures of Messrs. Amarendra Nath Chatterjee, Upendra Nath Bannerjee, Suresh Chandra Majumder and Suresh Chandra Das. The following is the text of the statement :—

Systematic attempts have of late been made by certain Congress leaders to vilify the Congress Karmi Sangha and to mislead the public as to the aims and objects of that Institution. We feel, therefore, that we owe it to the public to make an authoritative statement regarding our activities.

It is well-known how the Congress was sharply divided into two more or less hostile camps for about three years after the Gaya Congress. After the Cawnpore Congress in December 1925, when the Congress practically adopted the Swarajist programme, it was felt that time had come when an attempt should be made to re-unite all Congress Workers with a view to further the constructive programme which had for some years past been neglected owing to the pre-occupations of the leaders with the Legislative Councils. The following extracts from the preamble to the rules and regulations of the Sangha will explain the object with which it was started :—

"Whereas a feeling of disappointment and confusion is growing in the country for lack of activity in carrying out the constructive programme, and whereas it is absolutely necessary for the Congress workers to reunite themselves in a solid and disciplined group to consolidate their energy and influence and bring about a common understanding for a hearty co-operation among themselves, and whereas the session of the Indian National Congress held at Cawnpore had offered an opportunity for the unification of all parties within the Congress, it is hereby resolved that Congress workers in Bengal be formed into a Sangha under the name and style of Congress Karmi Sangha."

After Deshbandhu's death it became increasingly eminent that the Congress leaders had very little faith in village re-organisation, formation of peasant and labour unions, or other items of the constructive programme. All that really interested them was wordy warfare inside the legislature and in spite of the occasional mention of civil disobedience in their speeches and writings, the fact could no longer be concealed that what they really cared for was a histrionic display of their dialectic skill inside the legislature. They would neither find money for reviving the moribund Congress organisation in the villages nor would they undertake the organisation of agricultural and industrial labour. All the work that they really wanted the Congress workers to do was to serve as their canvassing agents at the time of the elections. Naturally there was dissatisfaction at this state of things; and it is this attitude which has been referred to as disloyalty to the Congress oligarchy and its president.

This unfortunate discussion has been further accentuated by the intrigues of a group of self-seekers who had been seeking for opportunity to discredit the Karmi Sangha and the honest difference of opinion over the question of the Bengal Hindu-Muslim Pact is now being interpreted by them as disloyalty to the Congress ideal! We do not propose to enquire too closely into the methods which they employed to obtain their victory at the last B. P. C. C. meeting; nor do we care to refuse the foul slanders in which they freely indulged. We will only mention here that in spite of great provocations from this body of men who have now gathered round the President, we have done our best to support the President in all his legitimate activities and that it is a malicious perversion of truth to say that our activities were in any way directed against Congress ideals. As a protest against the present methods of the B. P. C. C., we have decided not to seek re-election to the Executive Council of the B. P. C. C., and to make our position clear we wish to announce to the public,

(1) That our creed is the Congress creed of winning Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means.

(2) That so far as work inside the legislature is concerned the Karmi Sangha as a body abides by the programme of the Cawnpore Congress including non-acceptance of office in the gift of Government till the Congress itself decided otherwise; and that we have got no connection with the Moderates, Independents or Nationalists so far as their political programme is concerned.

(3) That we do not countenance communalism in any shape or form and we are therefore against communal electorate, communal representation or recruitment to public services on communal basis.

(4) That we believe that both the Lucknow and Bengal Pacts have failed to bring about unity between Hindus and Mahomedans.

(5) That there should be perfect freedom of religious worship, propaganda and association for all communities.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BENGAL

(6) That there should be no interference with the civic rights of any community to take processions with music along public roads.

(7) That the work of village reconstruction and organisation of industrial and agricultural labour should be taken up immediately.

Split in the Swaraj Party.

The stormy meeting of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee on the 13th instant terminated, much to the surprise of his friends as well as his opponents, in a resounding victory for Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta. Not only was the Hindu-Muslim Pact saved for the moment, but he was himself placed in a position of unassailable supremacy in the Congress organization of the Province, to do with it just what he may be pleased to do. For, by a special resolution, he was allowed, in the capacity of President, to add to the Executive of the Committee as many nominees of his own as there may be elected members, thus, giving him a standing majority on that body. However gratifying this personal triumph might have been to Mr. Sen-Gupta's vanity, it did not avert a split in the Swaraj Party, but rather made it inevitable. Indeed, hardly a week passed since the B. P. C. C. meeting when the split actually took place by the secession of a number of prominent members of the Swaraj party who were among the most loyal lieutenants of Deshbandhu Das. How and why the split occurred is evident from the Manifesto, the full text of which we give below, issued over the signatures of Messrs. T. C. Goswamy, B. C. Roy, N. C. Chunder, N. R. Sarkar and S. C. Bose :—

The Seceders' Manifesto.

We, the signatories to this statement, desire to place before the public our view of the present situation so far as Congress and other nationalist activities are concerned—which situation has been created by various circumstances leading up to the extraordinary meeting of the B. P. C. C. on the 13th of June last. Having worked for some time past on behalf of the Congress and the Swarajya Party and still continuing to be members of these bodies, we feel that it is our duty to inform the public why we are unable to support the new Executive Council of the B. P. C. C. which came into existence as a result of a B. P. C. C. resolution of the 13th June last. Srijuts T. C. Goswami, Nalini Ranjan Sarkar and Sarat Chandra Bose who, among the signatories, were offered nominated seats on that Executive Council have declined the offer; while Srijut Nirmal Ch. Chunder has resigned the seat to which he was elected as representing the Central Calcutta (District) Congress Committee. We have decided upon this serious step after anxious deliberation and under the compulsion of a sense of duty which forbids hesitation.

Unconstitutional.

In our view the Resolution of the B. P. C. C. dissolving the Executive Council and empowering the President of the B. P. C. C. to nominate half the number of Members on the new Executive Council was unconstitutional. It was entirely subversive of all democratic ideals. Besides it was thoroughly ill-advised. We feel that if we let the situation pass without challenge, we cannot escape responsibility for the inevitable destruction of the solidarity and the prestige of the Congress and the Swarajya Party in Bengal. We took little or no part in the marshalling of arguments or of human forces for the contest which took place on the 13th of June for the following reasons :—

It appeared to us that the contest was a personal one. It is common knowledge that Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta owed his election to the Presidentship of the Provincial Congress

Committee, as well as other offices in the gift of the Swarajya Party, to the support of a group of members who have subsequently formed themselves into the "Workers' Party." We soon found out that Mr. Sen Gupta was all along being led by this group. We did not mind Mr. Sen Gupta's primacy; but we always regretted that the position in which he had willingly placed himself did not allow him to put the interests of the country above those of himself and his group. We are aware that this group consisted of diverse elements, which were in the habit of voting "en bloc." They were, at the time of the death of the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das and until early this year, without the guidance of leaders like Srijut Amarendra Nath Chatterjee and Srijut Upendra Nath Banerjee; and we had reasons to suspect that in this group there were one or two weak individuals whom suffering, adversity and temptation had made unreliable. Last year we freely discussed this matter with Mr. Sen Gupta and asked him to investigate it, acknowledging all the time that we may be under misapprehensions with regard to those individuals. We pointed out to him further that constructive work in the villages would give those workers scope for activity and incidentally, provide means of livelihood for those who needed it. We found, however, that things were drifting and that the officials of the B. P. C. C. and of the Swarajya Party were not taking any steps to start work in the country. In fact, no constructive work was done in the country beyond a few well-advertised "tours."

Finally, the manner and circumstances in which Sir Abdur Rahim got into the Bengal Legislative Council made us very uneasy as to the prospects of the elections which are to take place at the end of this year. It would be clearly remembered that the objection to Sir Abdur Rahim was not then on the score of his being an extreme communal leader. We were interested in the return of a Swarajist (or Congress) Mahomedan gentleman against one who had formed part of the Government which had sanctioned and indeed gloated over the Bengal Ordinance etc. There can be no doubt that the return of Sir Abdur Rahim was partly, if not wholly, due to the fact that the President and the Secretary of the Swarajya Party were both absent from Calcutta at a time when their personal efforts were absolutely necessary for securing the nomination of a suitable and sound candidate. We were staggered by their amazing unconcern, we were even more shocked by their subsequent listless impotence.

Attitude of B. P. C. C.

In course of time, it became increasingly apparent that the B. P. C. C. officially were not able to accomplish to any appreciable extent any of the "Constructive" items of the Congress Programme. On the other hand, their attitude of hostility towards the work of the Deshbandhu Village Reconstruction Fund, merely because the Trustees of that Fund refused to hand over the control of the funds to them, did not advance the "Constructive" programme of the Congress in our province.

We suggested to Mr. Sen-Gupta, that a Board with a personnel consisting of members who would have confidence in one another, formed with the approval of the B. P. C. C. and the then Executive Council of the B. P. C. C. should be entrusted with the work of running the elections in all their details. The elections are far more important than the Councils; for the elections afford (1) Political training of a considerable section of the population, (2) opportunities for strengthening Congress organisation throughout the province, (3) funds which by a co-operative management of the elections, would leave a large surplus for constructive work. We were anxious to secure the services of men like S. J. Akhli Chandra Dutta, Rai Harendra Nath Chowdhury and others who were not, at the time, members of the B. P. C. C. This matter was practically shelved by the appointment of a nominal Committee consisting of Mrs. C. R. Das, Mr. Sen Gupta and Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the impracticability of which was soon perceived. By co-option this Committee was enlarged. There was substantial agreement as to the personnel of this enlarged Committee. The Committee started work, but about 2 months later Mr. Sen Gupta attempted to pack it by the introduction of new members. On this, some of the members of the Committee tendered their resignation and thereafter, the Committee ceased to function.

Real Issue Deliberately Confounded.

About that time the President and some of the officials of the B. P. C. C. were losing the support of the "Workers" many of whom naturally looked to S. J. Amarendra Nath Chatterji and S. J. Upendra Nath Banerji for direction. It is true that in Bengal since early April, the communal question has clouded issues; but we do not believe that the differences between Mr. Sen Gupta and others on the one hand and the "Workers"

on the other centred round the Hindu-Muslim Pact. The fact was that Mr. Sen Gupta was deprived of the principal support on which he had till then relied. Therefore, when he raised the cry of "Save the Congress" from the undesirable by saving the "Pact" and driving them out of the Executive, we felt that the real issue was being deliberately confounded. It was evident that the problem facing the B. P. C. C. could not be solved by counting of heads. While, therefore, the contest on the 13th June was personal, the step taken by the B. P. C. C. in dissolving the old Executive and allowing the President to nominate nearly half of the new Executive is at once ridiculous and serious.

The Pact.

We state below our attitude towards the question of the much-debated 'Hindu-Muslim Pact.' Mr. Sen Gupta could well claim sympathy for his view that the Pact should not be discussed in the present atmosphere. The Pact was drawn up by our late Leader. The principles, as we understand them, behind the Pact were (1) that some sort of arrangement should be made between the two great communities of the province and (2) that the Hindus ought to be prepared cheerfully to surrender a great deal in the matter of the spoils of office for the sake of unity. We endorse these principles. But it is impossible to overlook the fact that the Pact has never been ratified either by the Indian National Congress or by either of the two communities. Indeed, it has been denounced by both the communities. Therefore, the Pact cannot be an issue for the next elections. It is always open to a Leader or Leaders—with the courage "to stand or fall" by the terms of that or any other Pact to endeavour to secure its ratification; but no Pact which has not been ratified can be regarded as a live issue. We should make earnest efforts to arrive at a real settlement. While to attempt to renege the Pact, which in the words of Deshbandhu was never a "concluded agreement" would be an unnecessary gesture which may outrage feelings, we ought to state that separate electorates are fraught with the danger of creating a permanent division in our civic life. With regard to the vexed question of "Music before Mosques" as on other questions affecting the relations between the two communities, we feel that Resolution 4 of the Unity Conference (1924) which was carried unanimously has greater weight than an inference drawn from certain clauses of the Bengal Pact which were meant, if ratified, to come into effect after the foundations of Swaraj had been laid.

Acceptance of office unthinkable.

We believe that the Indian National Congress is the only political institution in the country which, by its traditions, its organisation, and its representative character is better fitted than any other to advance India along the path of freedom. We abide by the mandate of the Congress and feel that the Cawnpore resolution affords scope for the formulation of a course of effective and practical policy.

We have, after earnest discussions, agreed upon a clear-cut programme, consistent with the Cawnpore Resolution, which we propose to offer. We are of opinion that acceptance of office ought to be unthinkable except under an honourable settlement with Government; and we think that for such a settlement Deshbandhu's Faridpur Speech (1925) ought to be our guide.

The Alleged Revolutionaries.

We do not think that merely because certain persons were in the past accused as "revolutionaries" or convicted as such, we should ask them to stand aside from Congress activities. If they are pledged to the policy of the Congress, their past should not stand in the way of a welcome into peaceful and legitimate activities. Some of them are men of character, who have suffered and sacrificed much; some of them are good organisers; and as to the accusation by Government against the internees, past and present, in the absence of open trial, it is devoid even of the merit of a "bonafide" assertion. We, however, think that there should be no dual policy—a secret one of violence and an ostensible one of non-violence. The Congress policy excludes violence.

We do not despair of the Bengal situation. We appeal with confidence to all supporters of the Congress; and we look forward to a closing up of the ranks on clear issues, clearly thought out and clearly stated, by which alone we can be sure of our own conduct and receive the convinced support of the people.

Mr. Sen Gupta's Statement in Reply.

In reply to the above manifesto, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, President of the B. P. C. C., issued the following statement to the press on the 24th June:—

The manifesto which has appeared in the press over the signatures of Messrs. T. C. Goswami, N. C. Chunder, Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, Sarat Chandra Bose and Dr. B. C. Roy has caused me no little pain and surprise. Their intention evidently is either to secede from the Congress ultimately or to start a new party within the Congress. Until now they have taken no steps in either of these directions. In view of this fact I consider and I believe the public will agree with me that their manifesto is nothing more than an academic dissertation. I cannot, however, altogether ignore it as it contains certain statement which should not go unchallenged.

Dr. B. C. Roy has never been and is not now a member of the Swarajya Party although since Deshbandhu's death we were assured more than once that he would join the party. He is not a member of the B. P. C. C., and until lately was not even a member of the Congress. As a member of the public and of the Congress he is certainly entitled to criticise the B. P. C. C., and its President. But his claim to criticise in the capacity which he has assumed in the manifesto is absolutely without foundation.

Messrs. N. C. Chunder, Nalini Ranjan Sarkar and Sarat Chandra Bose were all along aware of the circumstances under which my circular letter dated the 1st of June, 1926, to the members of the B. P. C. C., was issued. Messrs. Chunder and Bose had seen and approved of the circular letter before it was actually issued to the members. Mr. Chunder was present at an informal meeting in my house where the draft of the circular letter was finally settled after some alterations suggested by Mr. Chunder himself, and Mr. Chunder sent me subsequently a list of names for inclusion in the new Executive Council in case the old one was dissolved. Mr. Sarkar's present attitude is to me particularly inexplicable. Mr. Sarkar admitted to me the reasonableness of the suggestions I had made in my circular letter and as far as I know he voted for all the resolutions moved at the last meeting of the B. P. C. C., and the success which attended my proposals at the B. P. C. C., meeting was in no small measure due to his efforts.

Mr. Goswami was not in Calcutta when my circular letter was issued and he absented himself from the B. P. C. C., meeting on the plea that he "had no place in the strife of tongues and hearts." The manifesto of which is a signatory indicates a certain change in his angle of vision. The public are no doubt entitled to speculate as to the antecedents of this change.

The signatories disapprove of the dissolution of the Council in the manifesto that was effected by a resolution at the last meeting of the B. P. C. C. Mr. Sarkar voted for the resolution. Messrs. Chunder and Bose left the meeting just before the dissolution resolution was taken up. As regards Mr. Goswami, I need not repeat that he was not present in the meeting at all and came down to Calcutta from Shillong a few hours after the meeting had ended. The public may well ask why Messrs. Chunder and Bose did not stay on and oppose the resolution if they disapproved of it and why Mr. Goswami was not present to oppose a measure which he now considers "unconstitutional and ill-advised." The B. P. C. C., and its President should not have been deprived of his views and suggestion.

The signatories have made a grievance of the fact that Sir Abdur Rahim was elected uncontested by the Mahomedan constituency of Hooghly-Howrah. I can assure the public that the executive of the B. P. C. C., did not spare themselves in their efforts against Sir Abdur Rahim.

But the candidates on whom we relied for contesting him at Howrah-Hooghly failed us at the last moment. I was at Dacca with the Secretary of the Swarajya Party where Sir Abdur Rahim had filed his nomination paper long before he filed it for the Hooghly-Howrah seat. The Swarajya Party candidate was returned by the West Dacca constituency as against the candidate in whose favour Sir Abdur Rahim subsequently withdrew. Leaving out the Howrah-Hooghly election, I ought to add here that the Swarajya Party and the Congress won all the other three Mahomedan bye-elections which have taken place since Deshbandhu's death.

Apropos of the constructive programme of the Congress I ought to bring it to the notice of the public that the signatories along with Mr. G. C. Bose, Principal, Bangabashi College constitute the Finance Committee of the Village Reconstruction Fund which was raised in December, 1921 and that it was the intention of Deshbandhu that they should

work in co-operation with the Executive Committee of the B. P. C. C., and the Working Committee of the Swarajya Party.

I place it on record here that the Finance Committee have refused to co-operate with the other two bodies I have mentioned. The public in fixing responsibility for failure of village reconstruction work will not lose sight of the fact that the signatories are in possession and control of the whole of the Village Reconstruction Fund.

In the last but one paragraph in the manifesto the signatories say that "merely because certain persons were in the past accused as revolutionaries or convicted as such we should not ask them to stand aside from Congress activities. If they are pledged to the policy of the Congress their past should not stand in the way of welcome into peaceful and legitimate activities." I agree entirely with the sentiments expressed in this passage. But I do not know why this passage should have been inserted in the manifesto unless it was for the purpose of insinuating that my action in asking for the reconstitution of the Executive Council was contrary to the sentiments expressed in it.

I have never objected to the presence of any ex-revolutionaries in the Executive Council. All I asked for in my circular letter was that the Executive Council should be composed of men who really believed in the present Congress programme. In my opinion any one may be a member of the Congress and also a member of the B. P. C. C. But I am strongly of opinion that the Executive Council can make no room for members of the Congress who have no faith or enthusiasm for its programme.

In conclusion, I would like to draw the attention of the public to the sudden and unexpected change in the tone and policy of "Forward" since Mr. P. K. Chakrabarti's resignation on the 15th instant. The paper was founded by Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das to serve as the organ of the Swarajya Party. It served that purpose till his death and continued to do so until early last week. Whatever the legal rights of the Directors may be, five of whom are signatories of the present manifesto, the public are entitled to know their reasons for this change.

From being the organ of the Swarajya and the Congress the "Forward" has now come to be the organ of the six Directors of the "Forward Publishing Company Ltd." Neither the President of the All-India Congress Committee nor the leader of the All-India Swarajya Party who is also the Chairman of the Board of Directors, or the President of the B. P. C. C. and the leader of the Bengal Swarajya Party was consulted by the Directors before they brought about this change. Before the signatories "can be sure of their own conduct and receive the sure support of the people" in favour of the "Clear-Cut Programme" which they have placed before the country they owe an explanation to the latter of the recent change of policy and programme of "Forward" which to say the least is a breach of faith with the Congress and the Swarajya Party and shows scant recognition of the trust undoubtedly reposed in them by its Great Departed Founder, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das.

Mr. Bose's Reply in Contradiction.

In reply to Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta's manifesto, Mr. S. C. Bose issued a lengthy statement to the Associated Press, in the course of which he referred to the letter written by him to Mr. Sen Gupta, on June 6th explaining among other things, his attitude towards retention or otherwise of the Bengal Pact. Mr. Bose expressed the opinion that the Bengal Hindu Moslem Pact being practically a dead letter as evidenced by recent disturbances in Calcutta and other parts of the Presidency, it was unnecessary in the opinion of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee to consider the question of rescission, revision or modification of the Pact and that the Working Committee of the All-India Congress Committee should be requested to go into the question and decide at an early date, the ways and means of restoring unity between the two communities. The Bengal Pact was in fact rejected by the Congress and when the Congress and not Bengal Swaraj Party was running elections, the question of the Pact really did not arise. In his letter Mr. Bose made it clear that he did not agree with the views of Mr. Sen Gupta, regarding the Bengal Hindu-Moslem Pact or those regarding dissolution of the Executive Council of the

Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. Mr. Sen Gupta had enquired as to why Mr. Bose left the meeting just before the dissolution resolution was taken up. After he had listened to the discussion over the resolution on the Pact, Mr. Bose had no doubt in his own mind as to the fate of any resolution or amendment opposing the dissolution of the Executive Council and he thought it would be perfectly idle to stay on and engage in any discussion over that question.

Goswami—Sen. Gupta Statement.

Happily the difference did not last long. As it is obvious, the dispute was over the Pact. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, who had come down to Calcutta to attend the Congress Working Committee's Meetings, were impressing on them the colossal folly of fighting over such a matter when what had to be effected was a real union of hearts. They met Mr. Goswami at his residence with Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta and the following joint statement was the outcome. It was issued over the signatures of Messrs. Sen Gupta and Goswami :—

"We are glad to announce that the points of difference and misunderstanding with regard to Congress work in Bengal, which unfortunately arose but which were not of a fundamental character, have been set at rest. After a free and heart to heart discussion on all the points at issue, we feel satisfied that we have agreed on such steps to be taken as would ensure the solidarity of the Congress in our province. We now look forward to harmonious work in the best interest of the country and of the Congress, which we believe to be her best and truest servant. It would be more or less than human if, in the heat of the controversy as to matter in which both parties believed ardently and honestly no recriminations were made. Nevertheless, we wish they could have been avoided. So far as we are concerned, any reflections cast on each other during the last few days are completely erased from the memory of our countrymen in whose service we have in the years past worked in concord and hope to do so in future.

The Bengal Pact.

Regarding the Bengal Pact, the 'Servant of India' wrote the following in its issue of the 24th June :—

"..... And the Pact? It is dead as mutton. No one wants it and no one can appeal to it without imperilling his chances at the election. The Hindus as a body are sick of it and in their existing humour will make short work of the public career of any among them who proposes a large share of the public employment and of representation on public bodies for Moslem brethren than at present. The Moslems, on the other hand, are confident, thanks to the unwearied efforts of Sir Abdur Rahim, of securing with their unaided exertion and without entering into a bargain with the Hindus, all that any pact might give them in the best of circumstances. It is publicly stated that Sir Abdur Rahim, though then in Government service, was with Deshbandhu the joint-author of Pact. If it suited him at the time to make a secret compact with the Hindus in order to advance communal interests, it does not evidently suit him now to do so. For one thing, he is now at liberty, as he was not before, to champion the Moslem cause, which he is doing with remarkable zeal. For another, the communal consciousness of his coreligionists has grown much keener now than before, and he himself is not a little

responsible for intensifying it. And for a third, the pact was to come into full effect only after the attainment of Swaraj, which presents itself now even to the most ardent zealots as none too near an event. If, then, merely by appealing to communal conceits, the Moslems are now in a position to put their fellow religionists into office and by that means fully satisfy communal ambitions and aspirations, it would indeed be surprising if they showed any disposition to rely upon the continued self-denial of the Hindus to give them a power and an influence which, in any event, under the Swarajist creed, they could not use. What part Sir Abdur Rahim actually played in bringing the pact into being we do not pretend to know. But even if he were at any time keen on it, there is no reason why in the altered circumstances he should continue to swear by it. And, in point of fact, he does not swear by it; nor does any other prominent Mahomedan. With the result that the pact is already dead, Mr. Sen Gupta's capture of the Congress organization notwithstanding.

"Neither do we regret that the pact has no vitality left in it. For, ardently as we desire a speedy redress of the balance between Hindus and Moslems and a firm understanding between the two communities on the basis of right and justice, we confess we have no predilection for any settlement, which has in view only the political exigencies of the moment and has no reference to fundamental principles. The motive which inspired the framing of the pact was undoubtedly the desire to down the bureaucracy by a consolidation of the non-official element, and if Moslems could be persuaded to make common cause by doling out, or rather by promising to dole out, to them a few more jobs, Hindus thought they might do so. But Moslems have now realized that if they did not subscribe to the Swarajist creed but on the other hand combined with a few non-Swarajist Hindus, they could from their own administration, which would be infinitely better than any ineffectual defeat which they might be enabled to inflict on the Government by joining up with Swarajists. The Pact therefore has no advantages now to offer to the Mahomedans on the low plane of politics on which it took shape and the Mahomedans as a community therefore stand aside from it. As for the better order of Mahomedans, they have ever held this bribe as beneath contempt. What the newly founded *Moslem Chronicle* says of it may be taken to reflect the feeling generally of the Mahomedan community about it. "We have always had grave doubts," observes this paper, "as to the sincerity of its framers. It was to take effect after the advent of Swaraj, when, if it comes at all, the Swarajists will probably be nowhere. Moreover, it is our firm belief that, pact or no pact, the future of the Moslem community will depend upon their own strength and not upon the grace of others." Again it says: "We confess we were never enamoured of this artificial alliance which Mr. C. R. Das's instinct of self-preservation prompted him to conclude with the Moslems as a community. The Moslems never cared for it and always looked upon it as a ha'pworth of political cheese which could be thrown into the dustbin any moment they liked. And to-day the Moslem's position is so very secure that he can easily afford to ignore it altogether." This admirably sums up the prevailing temper of the Mahomedans in regard to the Pact. Combinations made with a view to a passing phase in politics cannot, from their very nature, outlast that particular phase and the Deshbandhu's Pact, intended to give strength to Swarajism, cannot endure after the decline of Swarajism itself. But no one need waste a tear over it, as the Pact was never meant to subserve and never did subserve the broad national interests."

The Bengal Pact.

The A. B. Patrika of Calcutta wrote the following on the Bengal Pact :—

The so-called Hindu-Muslim Pact made on behalf of the Swarajya Party for Bengal was virtually an one-sided undertaking. It forbade "music in procession before any mosque," ignoring altogether the existence of temples, churches and other places of worship. Not only this. The prohibition was to apply for all time of the day or night, whether there was prayer or not. We need hardly say that the concession was against prevailing custom. Even the Calcutta Police authorities have observed far greater respect for the existing rights of non-Mahomedan communities to take out processions with music on public streets. The license for processions in Calcutta prohibits music before temples, mosques, churches, Gurudwaras, Synagogues and other places of worship at the time of public worship which means congregational prayer. The much abused author of the Calcutta Municipal Act (among whose "vices" orthodoxy was not certainly one) incorporated almost the identical terms of this provision in Police license in his Act. The Mahomedans also as a community never put forth the demand, and as a matter of practice processions with music have passed from time immemorial before mosques at all times of the day and night irrespective of any prayer, congregational or otherwise, that might be going on. Sir Abdur Rahim and a few Mahomedans of his ilk extorted the concession from Desabandhu Das who was in a mood to make any concession if thereby he could get the support of the Mahomedans in the Legislative Council.

A storm of protest burst in the country when the terms of the Pact were published. Hundreds of protest meetings took place and at a public meeting of the Hindus held at the University Institute presided over by Maharaja of Durbhanga, the following resolution was unanimously adopted :

That the Hindu-Muslim Pact made for Bengal by the local Swarajya Party and accepted by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee has greatly wounded the communal and religious feelings of the Hindus for which this meetings of the Calcutta Hindus records its emphatic protest and begs to inform the All-India Congress Committee at Cocanada that if it also accepts the Pact according to the recommendations of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee then the Hindus will not on any account accept the Pact.

The Bengal Pact was concluded on the 17th December, 1923. The Congress was to meet soon after at Cocanada. The Committee appointed at the Delhi session of the Congress had, in the meanwhile, made a draft of the terms of what was called the Indian National Pact. Dr. Ansari was a member of the Committee, Lala Lajpat Rai was another. The Committee were unanimous, except for differences on certain minor matters. The Committee were unanimous in regard to the vexed question of music before mosque. Clause 9 of the Pact relating to the subject runs thus :

In order to secure and preserve a calm atmosphere for public worship, it is hereby declared that no music shall be allowed in front of places of public worship at such time as may be fixed by Local Mixed Conciliatory Boards.

It will be seen that the restriction on music was to be observed only to secure a calm atmosphere for "public worship," that is, congregational prayer and not only mosques but other places of worship were to be respected in the same manner.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BENGAL

Clauses 10 and 11 of the Pact relating to religious processions run thus :

Religious processions of different denominations when falling on one and the same date shall follow such different routes or be fixed for such different times as may be determined by Local Mixed Conciliatory Boards.

In order to prevent friction and settle all questions giving rise to differences and conflicts between different religious communities, e. g. on the occasion of Dusheera, Moharram, Rath-Jatra processions, Sikh divans etc. etc. Provincial and Local Joint Boards will be appointed to act as conciliatory and arbitration boards.

Here is sincere anxiety to be fair to all communities and at the same time avoid conflicts by the efforts of the representatives of the communities concerned.

What was the fate of the Bengal Pact in the Congress? The iniquity of it shocked even not a few of the Mahomedan leaders and the fact was summarily rejected by the Congress by an overwhelming majority, the voting being 775 for and 205 against. The motion that was carried in the Congress runs thus :

Resolved that the Committee appointed by the Delhi sessions of the Congress do call for further opinions and criticisms on the draft of the Indian National Pact and submit for further report by 31st March, 1924, to the All-India Congress Committee for its consideration and Sardar Amar Singh of Jeswal be included in place of Sardar Mehtab Singh in Jail.

In spite of this resolution of the Congress, the Bengal Provincial Conference that met at Serajgunj accepted the Bengal Pact on the 3rd June, 1924.

Moulana Mahomed Ali who presided at the Cocanada Congress expressed himself strongly at the meeting of the Subjects Committee against the idea of the Pact. We read in the report :—

Mr. Mahomed Ali thought there was no necessity for any Pact Committees and special sessions. What was needed was the carrying out of the constructive programme. These Pacts and Committees would only accentuate the differences, while the work of constructive programme would remove them.

No truer words were uttered and his prophecy about Pacts and Committees has, as we now see, been fulfilled to the letter.

The Bengal Pact was concerned not merely with music before mosque. It allowed separate electorate to Mahomedans for Council elections leaving open the question as to the electorate of local bodies. It granted also 35 per cent of the Government posts to Mahomedans.

The National Pact, on the other hand, conceded separate representation to the Mahomedans to the legislatures "in view of the present state of feeling prevailing in the different communities and in view of the insufficient development of political sense and responsibility in them." But the principle was not to be extended to local bodies. Dr. Ansari was the only member of the Committee who wanted to extend the principle to municipalities and local boards. But the Committee were unanimous that "the electorate in all cases must be joint."

The question of percentage of posts in Government services does not find any place or mention in the National Pact. The Committee perhaps thought that the question was altogether irrelevant and showed only the meanness of a few educated people who in their eagerness for Government service were prepared even to bring about communal conflicts. These people, the Committee thought perhaps were of absolutely no worth in the struggle for Swaraj and should not find any place in any scheme of Swaraj.

European & Anglo-Indian Polity

January-June 1926.

The European Associations

The Calcutta Europeans on Reforms.

Speaking at the European Association's annual meeting at Calcutta, on the 9th February, Sir Hubert CARR, in the course of a lengthy speech, said the report of the Muddiman Committee revealed the expected difference of opinion as to the best way of dealing with the experimental scheme of Government at present functioning in the country. The attention of the legislatures had been concentrated more on the Constitutional question than on the more practical question of how to improve the conditions of the people. He did not wish to suggest that the Legislative members had done no useful work, for individuals had done good constructive work in various directions. He did not doubt the wisdom of insisting on co-operation from responsible parties, as a *sine qua non* to any political advance, and he asked the Association to watch the test.

Proceeding, Sir Hubert said that the Reforms had unquestionably done something to awaken national consciousness, and they had got to watch whether it was directed to racial considerations in industrial and social activities.

After referring to the hesitation of the Swarajist Corporation in Calcutta, regarding the New Market question, he said that if one considered the magnitude of the Reforms experiment, it was no easy matter for Indian politicians to assist in the working of the Reforms in the face of political and social opposition. The fact that many had done so called for respect and inspired hope. He recognised that there were irreconcilables, but they had to keep a balanced outlook, and the Association must remain unaffected by racial antipathy and must whole-heartedly stand the orderly development of India.

Indians in S. Africa.

Referring to the treatment of Indians in South Africa, Sir Hubert observed that all shades of opinion were united in the keenest resentment against the latest legislation before the South African Government. Indeed the Asiatic Bill was of a character which impelled those who spent their days in India to take steps to try and rectify the position. Their sympathy must be with their Indian friends in the struggle against the laws under which they laboured in South Africa. It was not easy for their Indian friends to be patient under those conditions. But it was useless to attempt retaliation. The only course open to them was to press the Home Government to second the efforts of the Government of India, to awaken a more considerate spirit in the South African Government.

Continuing, Sir Hubert paid a glowing tribute to the staff and particularly to Colonel Crawford, and welcomed Sir Charles McLeod.

After Sir Hubert Carr had delivered his address, Sir Charles McLEOD said :—

“ Naturally, the most important point before us, at present, is the fate of the Reforms Act, which has now run about 7 out of the 10 years’ probation. As the time draws nearer for considering the future, examination of the position exercises our minds. There were many of us who had spent the best part of their lives in the country, who doubted the wisdom of the late Mr. Montagu’s proposals when they were made public, not because we grudged Indians their legitimate aspirations, but because, rightly or wrongly, we held the opinion that Indians had not yet grasped the enormous responsibilities that must be shouldered in administering millions of people who were quite incapable of realising what self-government meant. The Act, however, was passed, and it became the duty of every good Britisher to help, in every possible way, to make it a success. That course, I may say, was adopted. Co-operation was invited, as an avenue for progress towards the goal indicated ; but it is much to be regretted that this was not met in the same spirit here in India. Indeed, the history of the past 7 years points more the other way.

“ We, commercial men, are accused of coming out here to pluck the pagoda tree and retiring to Europe with the spoils. This is an utter fallacy. The fortunes taken from India only represent a very minute percentage of the capital sunk around this great city. The European Association, under its present policy, is out to help the cause of earnest co-operation and well-considered progress. It will oppose any measures that militate against these important factors. There are welcome signs that a more reasonable attitude is now spreading. It is our earnest hope that it may continue to do so, and enable India to retain her enviable title of the brightest jewel in the British Crown.”

The Calcutta Europeans’ Address to Viceroy.

The Council of the European Association, Calcutta, presented to Lord Irwin on the 15th May at Simla a neatly couched welcome address assuring His Excellency of its assistance and support in the coming 5 years which promise, according to the Association, to be the most momentous in the history of this country. Mr. Langford James headed the Deputation of the Association which consisted also of Colonel Crawford, Mr. Owen Roberts and Mr. Dignasse. The former two represented the Council of the Association. Mr. Owen Roberts represented the Chairman of the Branches, and Mr. Dignasse, the ordinary members of the Association.

Before reading the address Mr. James acquainted His Excellency that the Association had branches all over India with the exception of one province. Its policy was regulated by the central body in Calcutta, the members of which were nominated by various branches. The Council had intended to present the address in Bombay, but proved impracticable. The Association had now however taken the earliest opportunity of waiting on

His Excellency. Mr. Langford James read the address to which Lord Irwin briefly replied emphasising that it was only through mutual understanding and confidence of all the peoples of India that India's future could be fashioned, and that, for his part, his one desire was to join hands with all official or unofficial British or Indians who were striving to build the India of the future. The Address stated:—

The Association's Address.

"The European Association desires to take the first opportunity of offering to Your Excellencies its most cordial welcome on your arrival in India. The Association, which was founded in 1888, for the purpose of safeguarding and maintaining the rights of Europeans in India, represents non-official Europeans of all classes and creeds in the country. Its membership is drawn from the European populations alike in the great cities as in the country districts, and comprises the employers and the employed, those interested in land and agriculture, those concerned in commercial and industrial enterprises of all sorts and professional men. The members of this Association are certainly as much concerned as any of the people who inhabit India, that stable and efficient government should be established and maintained throughout India; and it is the object of the Association, not only to safeguard the rights of its members, but also to work constructively for the good of the various populations of this vast country.

"The Association sympathises with the aspirations of the educated classes in India for gradual development of self-governing institutions in British India. It agrees that, wherever it is found possible or desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, the tests to be applied for the time and manner of the advance to this end are the co-operation received from those on whom the new opportunities of service have been conferred and the extent to which it is found that confidence can be placed in their sense of responsibility. The problem is one which emphatically demands goodwill and mutual understanding from all who would seek to solve it. But, in a matter which so vitally concerns the welfare and prosperity of all, the Association feels that there should be no cause for apprehension that sentiment will be permitted to override sane judgment.

"Your Excellency is arriving in India in the later stages of the first period of the experiment promulgated by the Government of India Act 1919. The period of Your Excellency's normal term of office therefore promises to be one of the most momentous in the history of this country. Throughout that period Your Excellency may confidently rely upon the loyal support of this Association. It is the opinion of the Association that it can give Your Excellency the best assistance by frank criticism and by stating its honest opinion upon all matters on which it may please Your Excellency's Government to consult it. It is in the sincere hope that Your Excellency may enjoy your term in this country and may be afforded the health and strength to perform the arduous duties of your high-office that we beg to subscribe ourselves."

H. E. The Viceroy's Reply.

The Viceroy replying said:—

Gentlemen, I should like to say, at the outset, how highly I appreciate the feelings by which you have been actuated in coming to Simla to present this address of welcome to Lady Irwin and myself. Your visit here has not only involved the inconvenience incidental to a long journey, but has also been made at a moment when climatic conditions hardly allow that journey to be comfortable. But, I can assure you that I am very sensible of the advantage of making the acquaintance of your President and the members of your Council, and thus being brought in direct touch with the aims and objects of your Association in the first months of my period of office.

Your Association was, I understand, founded rather more than 40 years ago, and up to recent times found little necessity or inducement to take any very continuous or active interest in politics. But the great changes which subsequently found expression in the Reformed Constitution in India led you to re-examine your methods and activities from a new angle. I can readily appreciate how weighty was the decision which your Council arrived at as to the course then to be pursued. The terms of that decision are clearly set out in the published policy of the Association and in the statement of the

considerations which govern the action of your Council; and it would be superfluous for me to congratulate you on the decision or on the manner in which it has been carried out.

My predecessor in December last has already paid an eloquent tribute—the fruit of his close observation during the past five years—to the part you have played in the public life and in working the Reform. It was hardly possible that with sympathies and political ideals rooted in British traditions, you should have followed any other course. Your duty was clear. Your inclinations, your past services in the development of this country, your intimate association with it, the great interests you represent and the contribution which it was in your power to make, all these conspired to impart responsibility and to preclude indifference. It was thus inevitable that you, well versed in the spirit of representative institutions, should have felt impelled to take a direct and important part when India made her first steps towards Responsible Government.

Each one of us can interpret, in terms of his own experience and thought, the objects which representative institutions are designed to serve. Such institutions, in turn, make a direct claim upon every community and upon every individual to subordinate personal interests, ambitions or prejudices to the common good. From each and all, these times ask a contribution according to capacity. There is none so rich and powerful that he may afford to turn a deaf ear to their appeal; and there is none so poor or weak that his contribution is not of value.

Behind and beyond all the political or religious differences and disputes the Government and the people of India, as I conceive the position, are partners, in a great undertaking—that of fashioning the future of India, with its, as yet unknown, reactions upon the lives of 300 millions of our fellow human beings. Some can bring gifts to the inspiration by which the whole must be illumined. Some can assist in tracing the design. Many can be at work on the intricate mosaic, out of which the picture is to take shape and colour. Real progress, indeed, can only come through responsibilities realised and accepted; and we may feel very sure that the task is one which will be successfully accomplished only by those who approach their work with hope in their eyes and trust in their hearts; for only through the mutual understanding and confidence of the workers, can the design reach completion. And it must depend on the efforts of all those who love India and seek to do her service whether the completed picture will be worthy to adorn the Temple of History.

Meanwhile, as you observe in your address, the day is drawing nearer when the accomplishment will be weighed on its merits, and when the Mother of Parliaments will be called on to give an impartial verdict upon the measure of achievement in a sphere in which her store of experience invests her with special qualifications to judge. It is a source of encouragement to me that, in my administration, which must be expected to cover the period in which these grave questions will claim decision, I may count upon the support of your Association and may look forward, as occasion may demand, to receiving the benefit of your judgment and advice. I shall value this help.

In conclusion, gentlemen, let me assure you that, at the inception of my work in India, I knew only the single desire of joining hands with all, whether British or Indian, official or unofficial, who are striving to build the India that is to be. It is permissible to hope that by such common efforts we may win the privilege of giving something to the solution of those problems, on which depends the well-being and ordered progress of this country and its people.

The deputation then withdrew.

The Punjab Europeans on their Rights and Privileges.

Colonel J. D. Crawford, the General Secretary of the European Association, in his address to a gathering of members and friends of the Association's Punjab branch, at Lahore on the 12th February traced the history of the Association, and referred to its origin having been

brought into existence by a measure brought in not by an Indian, but by the Government of India, under which it was proposed for the first time, to make a European liable to trial by Indian judges. The Planters from Bihar and all sorts of people had rushed into Calcutta and threatened to put the Viceroy and everybody concerned into a ship and send them all off to sea. The measure was not passed, said Colonel Crawford, and from that occasion the European Association had its being.

Some of those present would not, perhaps, realise the importance of what those who took part in agitations of that kind had done on behalf of Europeans in a country like this, but it might be made clearer to their mind if the speaker recounted a recent experience which was unfortunately only too common. Recently in Calcutta a motor car owned by an Englishman ran over a cooly. There were two English ladies and an Indian chauffeur in the car. The case came before a Coroner's jury entirely composed of Indians. It was alleged that the lady was unable to drive a car at all and that it was the Indian chauffeur himself who admitted that he was driving the car at the time of the accident. The jury found a verdict of "rash and negligent driving" on the part of the lady. It was not the speaker's intention to criticise, but it would be easily understood that it was very necessary that there should be a body of Europeans capable of looking after and ready to vindicate the Europeans' interests in general.

Association's Activities.

The speaker considered that the finest work of the Association ever done was to effect the passing of the Racial Distinctions Bill, reserving the right of an accused to be tried by a majority of his own countrymen. That in itself was a justification for the existence of the Association.

Colonel Crawford warmly congratulated the Punjab branch of the Association on its recent activities, and referred to its decision to send its legal representative to watch as many as possible of the trials of Europeans. This again, he said, should encourage support for the Association from Europeans throughout the length and breadth of India. The Association might be described as a White Man's Trade Union. Its purpose was to protect their interests, and to voice their needs in very much the same way as the Union of the working man did at home. The only real difference was that a Home membership was compulsory whereas here it had to remain voluntary. Originally the organisation had been merely a defensive one; then it had fallen into a state of stagnation and disuse until in 1898 there were some who said it had served its purpose, and that its place might be taken by the Chamber of Commerce and similar organisations. The speaker considered there was a fallacy in this suggestion, for a commercial organisation was always liable to be charged with being a capitalist organisation, and on that account its views would be very seriously discredited, for instance, in the eyes of a Labour Government at Home. It was decided in the end that the Association should not be allowed to die, and during the past four years, during which the work of reorganisation was undertaken, extraordinary success had crowned their efforts.

A Recognised Body.

Both in the Government of India and at Westminster the Association was now recognised once and for all as the body responsible for, and repre-

representative of, Europeans in India in general. Its influence stood side by side with that of the Chambers of Commerce of Bengal and Bombay. This might be proved by the references made even in the House of Commons to the Association merely by name, and a statement by the representatives of that Association was now recognised as conveying the considered opinion of the European community in India.

The speaker went on to mention further signs of the times. The President of the Association Sir, Hubert Carr, had recently been knighted. He considered that it showed more than ever the respect which the Association itself was inspiring in the view of the Government of India. Similarly invitations received from all political bodies in India for representatives of the European Association to attend important meetings showed also the general feeling that the Association had become an element to be considered in public affairs.

Colonel Crawford dealt at some length with the political point of view and, referring to the statutory Royal Commission he said it was most desirable that there should be no tinkering with the Reforms except through the Commission itself and he asked Europeans to do everything in their power prior to the appointment of a Commission to collect, in an unbiased manner, evidence as to the working of the administration under the present Reforms. The Constitutional policy of the Association, above all things, must not be a selfish one. It must stand for, and produce, conditions which would be beneficial to India as a whole. Such, he contended, had been the liberal policy of the Association for the past three years, and it was the only successful one for the future.

The Punjab Governor on India's Need for British Protection.

Sir Malcolm HAILEY, Governor of the Punjab, who was the guest of honour at the second annual dinner of the Punjab Branch of the European Association on the 26th February, replying to the toast of his health, delivered a speech reviewing the present political situation in India, and pointing out the need for Europeans in the country for many years to come, and explaining the causes of communal and religious differences in the Punjab. Said His Excellency :—

"It will be many years, before India can dream of dispensing with British troops, or with the strong element of British officers in command of the Indian section of its army. Perhaps we who live in the Punjab and who have a somewhat close connection with the problems of the Frontier are better able to appreciate that fact than are our friends in Madras and Bombay. We, perhaps, are aware somewhat more acutely that in the last resort the bayonet is more potent than the ballot-box. I should doubt whether you would find in the Punjab at large, which after all contributes the greater bulk of the recruits to the army and has a somewhat intimate acquaintance with the work which lies before it, any belief that India could raise a national army in the near future which would allow it to dispense

with the British troops. No argument that I have ever heard would convince me of the feasibility of maintaining British troops in the service of a purely Indian Government. It is unnecessary to prove the reasons. For my part I am convinced of the fact”.

Mischief of Communal Differences.

Referring to communal differences, Sir Malcolm Hailey said: “The mischief of these communal differences does not lie in the fact that such differences exist. I maintain that every community has a right to promote and defend its own interests, communal and religious. Differences have been rife in the past history of Europe and are rife to-day. Differences though I trust not in the present form, are inevitable in the future. The mischief does not lie there. It lies in the fact that the value of honest work is constantly impaired by unjust suspicion based on circumstances of birth or religion. I firmly believe that I have a mass of opinion in the Punjab behind me when I say that so long as this continues, then it is necessary that the administration of this country should contain an element of sufficient strength to allow the administration as a whole to carry on its work without being impaired by these differences.”

Concluding, His Excellency said: “Great as has been our contribution to the development of this country, great as we believe the field to be for further assistance which is open to us, great as is the value of India as a partner in the Empire, yet I believe that Europeans at large are convinced that there would be little value in that partnership unless it were maintained by a full and free recognition from India herself of the necessity of this connection, not only for her security, but for her development and her happiness. We wish to stand neither on power nor on prestige. We base our position rather on the needs of the future than on claims connected with the past. Our ambition is to stand in India as friends and coadjutors of a people who know our value and welcome our presence.”

The Madras Europeans on the Political Situation.

Presiding over the annual general meeting of the Madras European Association on the 24th February at Madras, Sir Alexander MAUDSLAY DOUGALL congratulated the Association on having gained an accession of more members and said that during the coming year, he hoped they would still increase their membership. There was ample room for the increase in membership as they had not quite an efficient number of members on the rolls judging the percentage of European residents in the city from the census report. Continuing the Chairman referred to the fall in the subscription and hoped that with the support and co-operation of the members the subscription amount would be very much improved next year. After referring to the particularly good report of work they had received from the branch associations at Bangalore and Trichinopoly, the speaker went on to refer to the address of Sir C. Sankaran Nair, delivered

last year at the Association meeting with a view to get the support of the Association in his election for the Council of State. It was, the speaker said, a very successful meeting, though not in point of number of attendance. When a gentleman of Sir Sankaran Nair's position addressed their meeting, the members were to have taken more interest in such a meeting and he thought that Sir C. Sankaran Nair deserved a little better treatment at the hands of the members by attending the meeting in large numbers. He was glad, however, that the Executive Committee advised the members to vote for Sir Sankaran Nair and that they were all pleased that Sir Sankaran Nair had come out successful in the elections.

Present Political Situation.

It had been usual for the speaker to say something, on an occasion like the present, about the political affairs of India. But he had been absent from the country for the greater part of last year and he did not feel he was sufficiently acquainted with the political affairs to refer to them at great length. Their Association, as a provincial branch, was not so much interested in Imperial affairs as they might be, because they had a Council of the Association in Calcutta and that Council was better qualified to speak on such matters. The members of the Council were more adoptive to look after the interests of their community imperially than the members of the branch association. That Council consisted of a very strong body of Europeans and at the meeting of the Council recently held, the Chairman, Sir H. Carr, had reiterated the position which the Europeans had adopted in this country.

Co-operation with Indians.

That speech of Mr. Carr was fresh in the memory of them all that it was needless for him to go over the same ground. "The position of Europeans in the country," the speaker said, "has in no way altered from last year. They still adopt the attitude that they are out to serve in India in the best possible way and the best way in their view is to support the reasonable demands of the Government and to endeavour a further extension of reforms, if need be, by all constitutional means. They are willing to co-operate with the Indian who is really anxious to the welfare of his country and who will agitate for any further instalment of reforms in all constitutional ways. But we have no time and will never have for those who, in the form of Swarajists, were out for destruction and not for construction. During last year Lord Birkenhead had in his speech referring to this country made the Indians understand that unless there is a little more co-operation with the Government by the various political parties, no further instalment of reforms would be received in this country. That is the belief that has been held for many years by the Europeans in this country. Unfortunately I believe many Indians thought that by agitation and non-co-operation with the Government they would force the hands of the Government at home to give a further instalment of reforms before ten years have elapsed. They now distinctly understand that no such thing is possible."

"A Distinct Improvement."

"Since His Lordship's speech," the speaker continuing observed, "I believe there has been a distinct improvement in this country. People are

getting down to real facts and they understand that without co-operation with the Government nothing further would be given to them. We, Europeans, welcome the change of attitude and trust that it will continue until parties in the country would be out for co-operation. We do not wish to keep the country with British bayonet or other armed force. Our position was summed up very tersely by Sir Malcolm Hailey in his address he gave to our association recently in the Punjab. Sir Malcolm Hailey had said that our ambition is to stand in India as a friend and co-agitator of the people who know our value and welcome our prestige.' That, I think, sums up our position and to the really honest minded Indian who has no gallery to speak to and has his own silent thoughts, it would be seen that is what we exactly want and what he too wants. He would be willing to state so if he is quite honest. But I am afraid that many fear to give free vent to their thoughts and instincts on account of what would be said of them in the Indian press and elsewhere."

Hindu-Muslim Unity.

Concerning the problem of bringing about unity between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, the speaker said that not very long Mr. Gandhi or Mahatma Gandhi fasted when he thought there was disunion between the two communities. As a result of that fast the leaders of all parties met in a "Unity Conference" and passed resolutions calling upon the people to preserve and work for unity between the Hindus and Musalmans. One would have thought that the resolutions passed in that atmosphere would have borne fruit. But unfortunately the two communities did not seem to trust each other. In a country like India, where there were so many sections one community seemed to be in a minority in one Province and in another the same community was in a majority. The majority in one Province would ask the minority in the same Province to trust them, to sink their communal differences, to give up communal representation and if they joined them, they would safeguard the minority's interests. Just the opposite views would be held in the other Province. To explain what he meant, the speaker went on to say that in Madras, they had a vast Hindu majority who would ask the minority community, the Muslims, to trust them and to sink their communal differences. The Mahomedans on the other hand would say 'no' to such an offer. In the north in some places the Mahomedans were in majority. But the Hindus in the minority would not trust them. So the great game was going on. But the real thinkers of India believed, that the country could only advance with the nationalistic spirit, if all people, the Hindu, the Mahomedan, Parsee, Sikh and other communities, would think that they were Indians first and sectarians next. Instead of sitting in the Councils and saying that they would not co-operate and disturb the Government, if they would go out to their own communities and preach the gospel of trust to the people they might then be able to do away with communal interests and carry on better national work, Until they would do that, the speaker did not believe they could ever have unity in this country.

The Anglo-Indians & Domiciled Europeans

Presiding at the annual general meeting of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association on the 6th April at Calcutta, Col. H. GIDNEY said :—

" I have a message to you from our late Viceroy, Lord Reading. He has really evinced a great interest in the welfare of our community. I remember so well my first interview with him when he did not know much about our people, and I also remember my interview with him 3 months afterwards when he seemed to be quite at faith with everything relating to us. Since then, I have had several interviews with him, and I can safely say that he has been a real and true friend of our community. He came to India, when the ship was in a very stormy and troubled waters, and he leaves it now when it is lying in smooth waters, and I feel sure it will be kept in smooth waters by Lord Irwin. Lord Reading sent me this message through his Private Secretary on March 30th last: 'His Excellency has been greatly impressed by the recent strides made by the community which you represent.' He sent us this the day before he left Delhi. I feel sure I am voicing your opinion when I say that you should record in a formal resolution of our grateful thanks to Lord Reading and also to Lady Reading."

The resolution was carried.

Concluding his speech, Colonel Gidney said :—There is one thing I am proud to be able to report, and that is that throughout India, and I speak especially of Burma, there is a perceptible awakening of the political and economic consciousness of the Anglo-Indian who is at last awakening from his sleep to realise that the time has come when if he wishes to keep any position in India, it will be by his own efforts and not by seeking the assistance or support of any other community. It is the grandest thing I have witnessed during the last ten days of my tour. This is the beginning of the future of Anglo-India. Why should we not now, when our political conscience has been awakened, go forward and accomplish everything we undertake ? "

At the concluding sitting of the Anglo-Indian Association the need for pressing the claims of the Anglo-Indian community in the changing conditions of India and their claims upon the Central Government for the education of their children were urged. The necessity of having a journal of their own and a proposal for floating a limited company, with the members of the Association as share-holders, for running the same was discussed, and a resolution to continue the existing journal meantime with Mr. Curtis of Agra, as printer and publisher and Mr. Maguire of Calcutta, as editor was adopted.

As regards Anglo-Indian education, Colonel Gidney pointed out the uncertainty about the future of European education. It was unfair, he said to expect the Indian taxpayer to pay for European education which was five to times more expensive than his own. The provincial revenues received

very little augmentation from the community and could have no claim for the education of their children upon the Provinces.

Whatever tax the community paid went to the Central Government. They contributed two-thirds of the Auxiliary Force, thus saving the employment of 16 to 20 British units and effecting a saving of Rs. 2½ crores in the Military Budget. The community thus had a claim on the central revenues for the education of their children.

The meeting unanimously passed a resolution claiming that Anglo-Indian education be made a Reserved subject under the control of the Central Government.

Resolutions were passed requesting the Provincial and Central Governments to enquire into the working of the Anglo-Indian and European charitable endowments, and urging early sanction for the admittance of Anglo-Indian units in the Indian Army and Navy with equal opportunities for entrance into all ranks as enjoyed by Indians. Other resolutions inviting the community to focus their political needs for presentation before the Statutory Commission on constitutional Reforms and requesting the Government of India to either appoint a member of the community on the Royal Commission on Agriculture or to allow one of them to give evidence before it were adopted.

As regards the formation of an All-India and Burma organisation, it was decided to seek legal advice as detailed steps for the dissolution and subsequent fusion of the existing associations into one big body involved legal and constitutional issue.

Colonel Gidney was re-elected President-in-Chief of the Association after the delegates had expressed confidence in him.

Col. Gidney Entertained.

On the 16th April Col. Gidney was entertained to a dinner by 150 members of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European community at the Grand Hotel.

Responding to the toast to his health, Colonel Gidney impressed upon the audience the necessity of unity and the desirability of their regarding themselves as statutory natives of India who had to create their own place in Indian National life under Swaraj. One thing which had impressed itself upon him during his recent visit to England was the fact that the Anglo-Indians had to create their own position in the new India which was daily being brought into being. For that reason he appealed to them to sink their differences and join the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association.

The Round Table Conference.

A Round Table Conference of the delegates representing the Anglo-Indian community all over India and Burma was held at the Town Hall to-day. Col. Gidney was voted to the chair.

Questions for discussion related mainly to the amalgamation of all the different provincial associations with the all-India body, and to the future policy of the community.

Amalgamation Scheme Approved.

The amalgamation was agreed to by a majority. There was only one dissentient—a delegate from Burma: but he stated that he did not belong to any association.

Delegates from the Madras and Allahabad Associations remained neutral, because, although they were in favour of amalgamation in their individual capacities, they had no mandate from their Association.

Colonel Gidney of need for a Central Organisation.

On the question of the future policy of the community, the resolution moved by Colonel Gidney and seconded by Mr. H. A. Stark was unanimously adopted. It stated that the Anglo-Indian community should join hands with the Moderate Indian and the Moderate European for the advancement of India and the attainment of Dominion Status within the British Empire, and that it should be an article of faith with every Anglo-Indian to treat the Indian as his equal and not as inferior as they expect to be treated themselves.

Emphasising the need of unification of the Associations into one compact representative body with a central organization, in the interests of the community, Colonel Gidney said that it must be obvious to each one of them that the interest of the majority of the Anglo-Indians was not provincial interest. Most of them were mainly maintained by the All-India services, and as these were directly under the Central Government, it was all the more imperative that the community should have a strong central body and should be able to speak on matters Imperial, with authority. All that they wanted was unity of thought of word and of action, and a central organization for conducting all matters of Imperial importance. They must begin to learn to think imperially and not purely provincially.

The Conference was representative of every province in India and every association in India and Burma. Mr. Campagnac (Burma) Mr. Desanges (U. P.) Mr. Barton (Bengal) as also Mr. Stark, editor, "Anglo-Indian Citizen" attended the Conference.

India in Parliament and Abroad

January-June 1926.

The Asiatic Bill.

HOUSE OF LORDS—24TH FEBRUARY 1926.

On the 14th February in the House Lords, Lord OLIVIER drew attention to the apprehension publicly expressed by the Viceroy with reference to legislation proposed by the King's Ministers in the South African Government affecting the rights and interests of the King's subjects of Indian origin and descent domiciled in South Africa. He asked for an assurance, that these rights would be equitably guaranteed and maintained. He quoted a Reuter telegram reporting a speech of the Viceroy published on 20th January, which they trusted would really bring matters to a head and let them have some kind of moratorium from this great pressure which was put upon Indians "and which is leading great disturbance in our own Imperial relation."

Lord Olivier, proceeded to deal with the history of the question, declared that the position had become more serious in South Africa by the re-introduction of the Colour Bar Bill. He quoted extracts from a speech of Gen. Smuts including a passage in which he said South Africans would gather on their heads the hatred of the whole of Asia. Lord Olivier said Gen. Smuts was not an alarmist, but a statesman who had studied history and knew from experience what the effects of the policy would be upon India. Lord Olivier said that generally in the opinion of Lord Reading, and, in the opinion of anybody who had been connected with the India Office, "these oppressive enactments—the Colour Bar Bill and Areas Registration Bill—were a distinct infraction of the rights belonging to Indians which the King's Government was bound to maintain and safeguard." In conclusion, Lord Olivier asked whether they were going to maintain the principle of colour equality or not; because that principle had repeatedly been declared on behalf of the Government by the previous Governments as the Empire's bedrock.

Lord LAMINGTON said there was no analogy between Indians in Kenya and Indians in Natal and South Africa. Generally, he was in entire sympathy with Lord Olivier with regard to the general statement of the case.

Lord BIRKENHEAD, replying, said the position being that the Government of India and South African Indians had been given an opportunity to state the Indian case before a Select Committee, he was confident the House would agree, in the circumstances, that no good, possibly much harm, might result from a full discussion here of those matters. That was the view taken by all political parties in India in similar circumstances, and he could not too highly pay a tribute to their good sense and moderation in agreeing to the Viceroy's request to postpone the debate in the Assembly on the subject. Lord Birkenhead earnestly hoped that the new examination of the problem now proceeding and the presentation of the Indian case by those directly affected would lead to a satisfactory and enduring settlement.

Lord Olivier welcomed Lord Birkenhead's statement and withdrew his motion for papers and the debate was ended.

HOUSE OF LORDS—19TH MAY 1926.

On the 19th May in the House of Lords, asking for official information on the agreement between the Government of South Africa and the Government of India, Lord OLIVIER said that the announcement made in the press was of a very satisfactory character, namely, that the Union Government had generously abandoned its enquiry and had agreed to proposals made by the Government of India for an open Conference between the two Governments. He declared that the manner in which the correspondence had been conducted by the Government of India and the deputation was a matter for highest congratulations to Lord Reading, who, by his diplomacy and the admirable character of the representatives he selected, had really achieved important success in the history of Imperial relations. He asked what arrangements were contemplated as regards the date and the place of the Conference. Would it be held concurrently or associated with the Dominions Conference in October? He was of opinion that the Conference might raise points, which might similarly arise between Dominions and possibly also Imperial Government. In view of its connection with India and the Dominions, he emphasised the need for maintaining the Western standard of life but such standard was impossible in any

community in which any class was treated as serfs and helots or was in any way excluded from whole of the privileges of that civilisation. He also asked whether the effects of the Colour Bar Bill on the Indians would be raised at the same Conference. He said they were as great an infliction as the other Bill which had now to be considered. Lord Olivier repeated that the maintenance of western civilisation was impossible while any class was excluded from certain occupations.

Lord BIRKENHEAD stated that no conclusion had yet been reached regarding the time and place of the Conference. He would inform the Parliament when a decision was taken. As regards the query whether the discussions will overlap, or be connected with the Imperial Conference, the answer must depend on considerations which, at present, cannot be precisely foretold. It depended on the date of the discussion. If, for instance, the discussions were held in London and synchronised with the Imperial Conference, all kinds of questions of convenience would require consideration.

It was also impossible to give a precise answer at this stage to the question whether they could usefully invoke such examination of the Conference at the Imperial Conference. He declared it was not proposed that the Conference should deal with the proposals of the Colour Bar legislation. It was now quite certain that the Colour Bar legislation would become law, though there were proposals in it, which, to put it mildly, were not received with favour and gratitude in India. There was a fundamental distinction from the viewpoint of the Indian settlers between the Colour Bar and Asiatic legislation. He pointed out that Asiatic legislation, particularly on the face of it, was pointed at the Indian population in South Africa. This discrimination was felt in many quarters to be harsh and difficult to bear. On the other hand, they had to recognise that the Union Government had an unquestionably grave and general Native problem with which to deal, that they were the custodians of the affairs and interests of South Africa in relation to the problem which beset them, and in the general problem, such Indian questions as might arise were secondary, and secondary also as regards the numerical importance of Indians in proportion to the population.

Lord Birkenhead added that one can not take the view that some considerations must, or even ought, to be decisive as regards Colour Bar legislations, as the Government of India had, not unsuccessfully, urged on the Union Government, to be a relevant and possibly decisive consideration in the matter of Asiatic question. Therefore, it was neither hoped, nor expected, nor would it be possible for the Colour Bar question to be in any way affected by the proposed Conference.

Lord Birkenhead agreed that an important advance had been marked by the agreement to hold a conference, but it would be premature to say that the holding of the Conference necessarily connoted certainty of agreement, or even compromise, but much had been gained. He declared that when the controversy was threatening to create and exacerbate feelings of ill-will between citizens of different parts of the Empire, it must cause the deepest anxiety to those who had the interest of the Empire at heart. It was not in the power of His Majesty's Government to suggest and, obviously, still less, to dictate a solution. The Government of South Africa, after discussions with the Indian deputations, had, not without sacrifice to the course to which they appeared already committed, consented to the holding of the Conference, which necessitated a postponement, which could not be welcome to many of their own supporters, and they made the Conference conditional only upon broad general considerations which Lord Olivier superficially examined in his speech. Lord Birkenhead would not at present discuss it because, in his position, it might, to some extent, embarrass the negotiations. Lord Birkenhead emphasised that they were indebted, as indeed the Government of India was deeply indebted, to the consideration and patience of the Government of South Africa in the matter deeply concerning many elements of population of that self-governing Dominion. Lord Birkenhead paid a tribute to the services of the deputation, whose constitution was a matter of considerable discussion between Lord Reading and himself. He was gratified that the deputation had presented the case with tact, persuasiveness and dignity. He endorsed Lord Olivier's praise of the efforts of Lord Reading on behalf of this cause. Throughout his Viceroyalty, Lord Reading had handled the matter, which, in many stages, presented elements of combustion, with his characteristic tact and conciliatory intonation. Lord Birkenhead repeated that it would be wrong even now to hold out the impression that the matter would be completely dealt with, but a large measure of success had been attained for two parts of the Empire by friendly discussion and patient negotiation. They had avoided a clash on a great Imperial issue and they were at least entitled to hope that the maintenance of this spirit and display of the same patience during the negotiations might permanently end the source of misunderstanding and anxiety, which had perplexed his predecessors at the India Office for generations.

LORD OLIVIER thought that Lord Birkenhead had given all satisfaction that could be expected at the present stage, although he was a little disappointed that Lord Birkenhead thought it impossible to bring into the Conference the question of the rights of Indians to which he had referred.

The Judicial Committee Bill.

The following is an account of the Debate on the Second reading of the Judicial Committee Bill in the House of Lords in June 1926 :—

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Viscount Cave): My Lords, the purpose of this Bill is to authorise the appointment of two members of the Judicial Committee with experience of Indian law and at a reasonable remuneration. Appeals to the Privy Council, including the special references, have grown very rapidly during the last twenty years, and the Indian appeals especially, which in the years 1906 to 1910 averaged 52, have, I believe, in the last five years averaged 91 per annum. It has often been necessary for the Council to sit in Division. It has sometimes been difficult to provide sufficient members of the Judiciary both to man the House of Lords when it is sitting on appeals and to man the two Divisions of the Privy Council. We never sit now in this House with fewer than five members. It is desirable to have five members sitting in the First Division of the Privy Council and not fewer than three in the Second Division. It is not always easy, with the present material, to provide that number.

I think that even my predecessors in my present office found some difficulty, but mine is greater. Whereas they had the assistance usually of four ex-Lord Chancellors I have only one upon whom I can rely. Three of our ex-Lord Chancellors by a chapter of accidents, have their time fully occupied elsewhere, but my noble and learned friend Lord Haldane still gives his invaluable help, both in the Judicial work of this House and at the Privy Council, sometimes, I am afraid, without regard for considerations relating to his own health. Also one is able to have the voluntary assistance of those distinguished ex-Judges of the Court of Appeal who sit in this House, but it is absolutely necessary that we should have two members of the Privy Council with special experience of the diverse systems of Indian law and able and willing to give the whole of their time to the judicial work when the other tribunal is sitting.

We have had, since 1887, two members of the Court appointed under the Judicature Act of that year, but under terms which provide for them a remuneration which is really not sufficient even to pay their ordinary expenses. One of those, Sir John Edge, retired at the end of May last at the age of 84, and I should like to take this the first opportunity I have had since his retirement, of paying a tribute in a few words to the great public services which he has rendered. He was appointed a Justice of the North-Western Provinces 40 years ago. He returned to this country in 1898. Since then he has been, firstly, a member of the Council of India, and since the year 1908 an active member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and I think that not only his knowledge of Indian law but his experience of the Indian character, and his strong common sense, will long be missed by his colleagues on that tribunal. The other member sitting from India is Mr. Ameer Ali, who has also been with us since the year 1907, and who has done, I need hardly say, admirable work, but during the last year or two has sometimes been prevented from sitting by reasons of health.

I think I have said enough to show that some further assistance is required. Last year, after consultation with the Secretary of State for India, and with the late Viceroy, who was then here, we proposed to the Government of India that two new members should be appointed at a salary of £4,000 a year each to be contributed as to one half by this country and as to one half by India. That proposal was brought before the Indian Legislature, but after debate was rejected. I have read the debate and I am not quite sure that all the members who took part fully understood what was proposed, and I am told that it is possible that a different view may be taken at some future time. Of course the matter cannot wait, and what we now propose to Parliament is that His Majesty

men criminals. I wonder how the Noble Lord himself would like to be called a criminal if certain charges were made against him by people unknown to him, if the soundness of those charges was investigated, in his absence, and he was not entitled either to speak himself, to cross-examine the people making the charges, or to have someone there to perform this function for him. If in those circumstances he were found guilty, I am sure his blood would boil if someone afterwards called him a criminal, and I think he ought to be a little more circumspect than he was just now in using that most offensive term against citizens of the British Empire who have been charged with offences of which they have never had a fair opportunity of clearing themselves. Charges have been made, but they have never been expressly formulated and their soundness has never been tested in a court of law.

Intimidation of witnesses—a Myth.

I submit to this Committee that the Bengal Ordinance, which we are considering, is a great blot upon the Government of India. It runs counter to the very elementary British principle that no man should be condemned unheard, but, as the Noble Lord told us this afternoon, there are some 130 British subjects who are at present under one form of restraint or another in India, who have been condemned without being given the slightest opportunity of proving whether or not they were innocent. The justification for this Bengal Criminal Ordinance Act was the statement that the ordinary common law would not be effective in dealing with these particular cases. It was said that if the cases were tried in the open court, there would be intimidation of witnesses and there might be violence offered to witnesses, but it is perfectly true, as my Hon. Friend the Member for Dundee said—and I challenge the Noble Lord to produce any evidence to the contrary—that the authorities in India have not been able to adduce a single case in recent times—that is, since the Bengal Criminal Ordinance Act came into force, and even for two years before that—in which there has been any intimidation of witnesses. The Noble Lord says he is prepared to produce evidence to show that intimidation has been taking place but if he does that to-night he will be doing something which the Government of India have been unable to do in the Legislative Assembly and I should hear that evidence with very great interest.

Unfounded Charges.

I want to suggest to the Committee that there was absolutely no justification at all for applying this exceptionally suppressive measure to India. There is no proof that the ordinary law has broken down. It was said, for instance, that there was a great deal of smuggling of arms, ammunition, and explosives of one kind and another going on, and the warrants which were issued for the search and arrest of these men expressly stipulated that they were intended to discover arms and explosives in the residence of these men. The searches took place, and there was not a single bomb, revolver or explosive ingredient, nor indeed a single revolutionary document, found in the houses searched. There is one particular point which could be tested, and what was the result? The Commissioner of Police for Calcutta, Sir Charles Tegart, who was then Mr. Tegart, admitted a few days after the raids had taken place that not a single revolver nor any explosive or bomb had been discovered in these houses. That is an indication of the amount of substance there is in the charges against these men. One was smuggling of arms and ammunition, the other was revolutionary conspiracy to overthrow the Government by violence and the third was conspiracy to assassinate Government officials. The Committee ought to remember the kind of men who have been arrested on charges of this sort. There is the Chief Executive Officer of Calcutta Corporation, a man of great culture, of great refinement, of unimpeachable character. Is it at all conceivable that that man has been conspiring to assassinate Government officials? There are many other men of his type among the prisoners. I do not think the Noble Lord or anyone else could seriously suggest that men of that type were really involved in criminal conspiracy.

Challenge to Produce Evidence.

The Government is said to have got evidence. I would like the Noble Lord to tell us what kind of evidence they have got. Have they any documentary evidence? If they have, I hope he will say so. If they have not, I hope he will say what kind of evidence they are relying upon. Presumably they are relying upon verbal statements by some people who may or may not be enemies of those charges. The Noble Lord knows enough about human nature to know that motives of jealousy or hatred may enter into statements of that kind. It is quite conceivable that some of the brilliant young men in the

Swarnajist Party have made enemies and that these enemies have taken the opportunity of bearing the witness against them. The only way of testing whether such charges are false or true is by examination and cross-examination. In a British Court of Law the unsupported evidence of a witness is not accepted until it has been subject to examination and cross-examination. None of this evidence has been subjected to that. It is expressly forbidden in the Ordinance that either these men or their representatives shall be entitled to be present when their cases are being heard. I do not know what the constitutional lawyers of this country think of procedure of that kind, but to me as a layman it seems a gross outrage on elementary British justice.

Chorus of Condemnation.

A very distinguished public servant who had a long and honourable connection with India, said something about it in his time. I refer to Lord Morley. In 1908 there were deportations from India without trial and Lord Morley, who was then the Secretary of State for India, was very concerned about what was happening. He wrote on the 18th November to Lord Minto who was then Viceroy :

"One thing I do beseech you to avoid a single case of investigation in the absence of the accused."

All these cases to which I am referring are taking place in the absence of the accused.

"We may argue as much as we like about it and there may be no substantial injustice about it, but it has an ugly, Continental, Austrian, Russian look about it."

In 1909 there was active agitation among the members of the Tory party themselves against these deportations without trial. In that year Lord Morley wrote, and it is of great interest in view of who is the present occupant of the position of Secretary of State for India :

"In the last fusillade of questions at the beginning of the week, a very clever Tory lawyer, F. E. Smith, the rising hope of his party, joined the hunt, and some of the best of our men are getting uneasy. The point taken is the failure to tell the deportee what he is arrested for, to detain a man without letting him know exactly why, to give him chance of clearing himself. In spite of your Indian environment, you can easily understand how distasteful is such a line as that to our honest Englishmen with their good traditions, and you will perceive the difficulty of sustaining a position so uncongenial to popular habits of mind."

What Lord Birkenhead Thought in 1909.

But I think I can produce even better authority than that. This question was asked on the 23rd May 1909 :

"Has the evidence against the prisoners concerned been made known to them so as to give them an opportunity of explaining or dealing with it?"

That is a very pertinent question, which I would have been proud to put myself. It was not put by me, however; that question was put by Mr. F. E. Smith, now Lord Birkenhead. Again, he asked another question which shows how he, as a constitutional lawyer, soaked in the British tradition that a man should not be tried and punished unheard, was very concerned and disturbed at what was happening at the time, which is something analogous to what is happening now. He asked :

"Will the right hon. Gentleman say what is the objection to informing the persons who have been deported as to the evidence and the grounds upon which they have been deported?"

Demand for Release or Proper Trial

I am prepared to rest my case on the authority of the present Secretary of State for India. What was good law in those days, what was good constitutional usage, what was good doctrine of ordinary British justice is equally good to-day. I am prepared to support him in demanding that these men should either be released forthwith or be given an opportunity of proper trial according to the conception of British justice on the attitude taken up by Lord Birkenhead in those days. It is said that every man who has been charged is a member of a terrorist organisation. We might ask just as a small act of justice whether he would not give the name of the terrorist organisation referred to. That cannot incriminate anybody. There is no witness involved to be subjected to violence afterwards if he gives the name. I would invite him to do so as proof of the bona-fides of the Government in the matter. I would remind him of this—it may not be true, I have no foundation in fact—but there is an ugly suspicion abroad in India that these men are being taken and interned not because there is any reality in

the charges formulated against them but because they were particularly able and active members of a political party which was becoming a great menace to the powers that be in India. If he would clear my mind and the minds of many people in India of that suspicion, he should at least be prepared to tell us the name of the terrorist organisation.

My final word is this, These men have now been interned, and have had their liberty taken away. I do not care what internment it is, but their liberty has been taken away for nearly two years and they have had no chance of defending themselves. How much longer are they to be kept in this position? Is it the intention of the Government of India to keep these men interned for the rest of their lives? Not even the Noble Lord—die-hard though he may be—is prepared to get up in this Committee to-night and say that these men are to be interned without trial for the rest of their lives. That brings us to this. That some time or other the Government must say that these men must be released and come to trial according to the ordinary perceptions of British justice. Therefore, I invite the Noble Lord to urge the Government that they must come some time or other to say that there shall be no further delay in the matter but that for the credit of our British justice and the credit of our reputation in India these men in the near future shall either be brought to trial or set at liberty.

Mr. JOHNSTON in the course of his speech said :—

"I rise, however, particularly to discuss a subject which has not been discussed this afternoon. The Noble Lord himself, in his introductory statement, skated over the subject. I compliment him on his statement this afternoon and on the number of the subjects he was able to deal with in a smallish way in the time at his disposal. But I must say that I admire him when he is more natural than he was. His loquacity was restrained this afternoon, and I admired his politeness and affability. Personally, however, I prefer him when he is more pugnacious. Probably I shall succeed him in making him more pugnacious before I am finished.

No charge against Mr. Subhas Bose.

I want to refer to the subject of deportation of persons without trial, without even a charge levelled against them. I want to take one specific case as an illustration—the case of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, the late town clerk, or Chief Executive Officer of the second city of the Empire, Calcutta. The Chief Executive Officer really means an official like our town clerk. Mr. Bose a year and nine months ago was arrested under the Bengal Ordinance, or, I think, it is Regulation No. III of 1818 passed at a time when the descendants of the Grand Mogul sat on the throne of Delhi. The Regulation was passed to deal with foreign Powers, with trouble on the frontier, perhaps with French emissaries. Mr. Bose was arrested, put into gaol, and has lain there for a year and nine months. No charge has been preferred against him to this day. No charge was levelled against him, and frequent attempts have been made in this House and elsewhere to extract from the Noble Lords a reason, a justification for his imprisonment without charge or trial. It is non-British and inhumane. So far we have failed to obtain any satisfaction. When this Ordinance was being passed the late Viceroy, Lord Reading made this statement :

"This Ordinance is directed solely to those ends, and will in no way touch or affect the interests or the liberties of any citizen, whether engaged in private or public affairs, so long as they do not give themselves up to criminal methods."

I am not concerned to deny that the Government of India have arrested persons under the Ordinance guilty of violent agitation, or agitation which made for and ended in violence. I do not deny that. But what responsible people in India do deny is that there is any discoverable person or justification for arresting the town clerk of Calcutta and confining a man like him in gaol for 21 months without any charge.

Agents Provocateur.

Let me take this evidence. I have here a statement signed by two other persons, Bhupendra Kumar Dutt and Jiban Lal Chatterjee. It is to the following effect :

"When we first joined the Indian National Congress and the N. O. O. movement we found mixing freely with the young men of the country, amongst others, a certain person whose name we are ready to disclose in case of a proper and impartial inquiry into this most serious affair. We have knowledge that while previously locked up in gaol as State prisoner, this man, along with some others of his ilk, was in touch with and helping the secret service even from gaol. While the non-violent N.C.O. movement was at its full swing he was inciting—trying to incite—young men to form a party of violence. He tried to persuade even some of us to take up the leadership of such a

party as against the party of non-violence N. C. O. which, according to his preachings was doing immense harm to the country. Failing to instigate persons who knew something of men and things, he began to characterise those persons with having turned moderate, and we know that with an amount of oratory and support and financed by dark powers from behind, he succeeded in getting together a batch of young men. We had very strong reasons to believe that whatever political violence has been committed in Bengal after the non-co-operation movement is the activity of this group consisting of the innocent dupes of this "agent provocateur," and was incited and engineered by him."

Here is a criminal evidence. The writers of this letter were prepared to give the man's name if need be and everything about him. The name, I think, came out in Court, but for good reasons, doubtless, the matter was not pressed by counsel for defence.

"Czarist Proceeding"

Here is a definite allegation. It is a definite allegation of a Government agent inciting young men to violence. Is it, we are entitled to ask, on the strength of suborned evidence, that men are landed in gaol? We are entitled to ask that question. It is an anomalous proceeding. It is a Czarist proceeding. The great Czar of Russia got hold of the Intellectuals and sent them off to Siberia. But the British Empire cannot last on this kind of thing. If this man had committed crime he ought to have been brought to trial. Let such men be charged! I know what the answer will be in the case of Mr. Bose and men of his type or kind. It is that if they were brought to trial then the witnesses and others would be murdered. But I have firsthand knowledge from the Chairman of the Swarajist party who says that strings of cases can be produced, tried by Indian Judges and Indian juries, with Indians witnesses, where the accused was found guilty and where no harm has come to the witnesses or to the jurors. It is declared that there is no evidence whatever of any violence to witnesses or to jurors unless the Government goes back for almost 18 years.

The So-called Enquiry.

Earl Winterton: This is a definite charge and deals with some persons of the Hon'ble Member's acquaintance. There was an inquiry into these allegations, and they were found to be utterly unfounded. I cannot give instances at the moment, but I will in my reply give numbers of cases where the witnesses had been interfered with.

Mr. Johnston: I will take the first point of the Noble Lord. An appeal was sent from gaol to Lord Reading. I understand the Noble Lord to say that these statements have been examined by him personally.

Earl Winterton: Yes, I saw the allegations that were made. They were without foundation.

Mr. Johnston: May I ask the Noble Lord when that inquiry was held? Were these two prisoners represented at the inquiry? Was their evidence taken or was an "ex parte" inquiry held in their absence?

Earl Winterton: If the Hon. Member takes the view, which is very much favoured by his party on this question, then it is useless for me to argue. What I say is that an inquiry was held by the proper authority and the allegations were found to be devoid of all foundation.

Mr. Johnston: Did some officer of the Government make an inquiry into the definite statement made by these two men?

Earl Winterton: Two criminals in goal made allegations against the authorities, and those authorities, in accordance with the practice of inquiry into such allegations, made full inquiries and those allegations were found to be without foundation. I know that will not convince the Hon. Member, because he suffers from the delusion—

Mr. Johnston: I want to know, Captain Fitzroy, if that is a Parliamentary expression, and I would remind the Noble Lord that two can play at that game.

The Deputy Chairman: The Noble Lord did not say anything which is out of order.

"No Justification for these Arrests."

Mr. Johnston: The Noble Lord has been very ungentlemanly, and if he wants that kind of fighting he can have it. There has been no impartial inquiry at all into this matter, and to say that an inquiry was held by some officer, who may perhaps have been implicated in organising agents provocateur, and to hold the inquiry in the absence of those who make the accusation, is worse than a Russian procedure. There is no delusion about the fact that these people are in goal without trial, and I deny that anybody is a criminal until he has been found guilty in an open Court. If a man is simply arrested on

INDIA OFFICE ESTIMATES

[H. OF COMS.]

word of a police officer or an agent-provocateur I deny that he is a criminal. I have tried to see both sides of this question. I have made inquiries among officials and English representatives in Calcutta and elsewhere. I have taken the trouble to read up the proceedings in the Legislative Assembly. I have read the speech made by Mr. Donovan, which was a very able speech and I find that no attempt has been made to justify under the British flag imprisonment without trial and my firm conviction is that there is no justification for these arrests. This kind of thing is simply poisoning the whole of our administration in India and is preventing proper harmonious relations between the races and the classes. This House ought to ring with indignation against any Government which permits the putting of men into prison without a charge and without trial."

Col. WEDGWOOD declared that Lord Irwin was perhaps the ideal Viceroy India could have during her present troubles,—not merely democratic, but his religious sincerity enabled him to make a profound appeal to India with its religious dissensions. It seemed to him that Lord Irwin was a man to whom religion came only second to pride in Britain's traditions and that was exactly a sort of control and guidance India needed at present. He hoped a Royal Commission would be established this or next year so that it could be ready in 1929. He believed the Labour Party was being developed in India which would do most to break down the absurd superstition of walking out of the Assembly. He suggested the revival of the title of honourable for all the members of the Legislative Assembly so as to exalt the position of the Indian members of the Parliament.

Mr. Shapurji SAKLATVALA who was given a fairly early chance in the debate, delivered one of those logically-cut speeches for which he had earned the distinction in a section of the English press as possessing a 'logic mad' eastern mind. He began by confessing his great partiality for the Swaraj Party—the differences in which was so happily commented upon by the Under-Secretary of State. Mr. Saklatvala's comment on the Governmental position with regard to the communal riots was very enlightening. In the course of his speech he said :—

"A morning paper with a notorious title had an editorial article which I passed on to the late Minister of Health at the Conference. It deliberately takes credit for the cleverness with which British officials have separated the solidarity of the Hindus and Mahomedans in India. It claims full credit for undoing within a very short period, the work that was done by Gandhi and Das on sentimental grounds. . .)" The greatest dialectical success which Mr. Saklatvala scored in the debate was in his ready retort to Earl Winterton's interruption : "If the British people, employers and employed, would pay more for the wheat, the cotton and other goods produced in India, India would be able to buy more British goods." Mr. Saklatvala : "It will not go to the cultivator. It will go to the broker, the money-lender and the exploiter. The Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company will put up their freight as soon as they realise that raw materials in India are producing a good price." On Winterton's dissenting, Mr. Saklatvala came down with an illustration as to how the freight of Manganese was raised from 12 to 52 a ton during the Russo-Japanese war when owing to the scarcity of Russian manganese, the Indian manganese appreciated in price from 40 a ton to 120 a ton. His success over the chairman who enquired whether the mines were not included in the transferred subjects, thereby suggesting that they should not be discussed, was also signal. Mr. Saklatvala replied : "There are four mining areas in Central India which are directly under Government control, associated with the Government railways for the provision of coal."

Earl WINTERTON, replying to the debate, remarked that the absence of a serious criticism was a tribute to the success of administration of the Government of India during the past year. He expressed gratitude at the Oppositions' non-party attitude in respect of the Indian affairs. He emphasised that the Labour Government had accepted the policy of the Bengal Ordinance. Evidence has convinced him that all persons dealt with under the Ordinance were guilty of terrorist conspiracy or that they were privy to it. He concluded by urging the Indians to co-operate fully in the task of making the present stage of the Reforms useful and beneficial, for thus alone would the next stage towards the fulfilment of their aspirations be achieved.

The estimates were then agreed to without division.

The Lord's Debate on India

HOUSE OF LORDS—THE 28TH JULY 1926.

The three speeches on India in the House of Lords on the 28th July 1926 were a sort of adjunct to the debate in the Commons as given in the preceding pages. The discussion in the Lords was the more interesting of the two because there we had the present and the late Secretaries of State facing each other and following them a rather striking speech from the Ex-Viceroy, Lord Reading. The following is the full text of the speeches delivered on the occasion and is reproduced from Hansard :—

" Lord OLIVIER had given Notice to ask the Secretary of State for India to give this House information on such aspects of Indian affairs as he may consider to be of general and immediate public interest, and in particular with regard to the apparent diminution in some quarters and recent exacerbation in others of turbulent or unconstitutional manifestations of popular feeling".

The noble Lord said : My Lords, I placed this Notice upon the Paper some months ago for the simple purpose of enabling your Lordships to receive, as you are always anxious to receive, from the Secretary of State his account of the fortunes of that Dependency during the last twelve months, and I included in my Question some of the subjects in which I thought that your Lordships would be interested. In addition to those subjects I have privately given notice to the noble Earl of one or two other points upon which I shall be very glad if he will give us some information. I read the statement that was made in another place by the Under-Secretary of State for India and I did not see in that statement any reference to our relations with the Kingdom of Afghanistan or to the difficulties which are continually confronting us with regard to the frontier tribes between India and that country.

I shall be very glad if the noble Earl can tell us how our relations with the Emir are proceeding with regard to those difficult questions of the allegiance and employment of the frontier tribes about which we have had constant correspondence with him, desiring, as we do, to retain their loyalty to us whilst not interfering with their occasional employment in Afghanistan. The position of these tribes is well known to your Lordships. There is continual unrest among them and a continual disposition to seek employment and a means of livelihood outside their own country and, owing to that economic fact, difficulties arise both on our side and on the side of Afghanistan. In that connection, I notice that this point is referred to in a Notice that has been given by the noble Earl, Lord Mayo, with regard to the establishment of our hold upon that part of the country by the building of roads. This is a point to which the noble Earl in another place did not refer, and upon which I think that your Lordships would be interested to have some information.

Administration of Indian Jails.

Another point which I gave the noble Earl private notice of my intention to raise concerns the administration of Indian gaols. In August last I called his attention to that subject in connection with a case that had arisen in which a charge was made against the administration of Indian gaols and which became the subject of a judicial decision. The noble Earl, in replying to me upon that subject, said that the Government of the Punjab, on the publication of the article containing charges against the administration of Indian gaols, ordered an investigation by the Inspector-General of Prisons, and that inquiry reported that the allegations were without foundation and were false. The Government thereupon were advised that a suit should be brought, and the gaoler in the case brought a suit which was filed in the Court of the Sub-Judge claiming damages, and the Local Government bore the cost of the suit. On the whole, the judgment was in favour of the defendant, and an appeal was entered, again at the cost of the Government, and the noble Earl could not give us further information as to the costs of the case at that time.

I urged that some general inquiry should be made by the Government of India into the administration of gaols and I have learned that since that time a much more searching inquiry has been made by a Commission appointed for the purpose. The Report has been published and I have seen a copy of it. No doubt the Secretary of State for India has also seen it, and I think he will agree with me that the facts with regard to the administration of gaols revealed in that Report, contrary to the impression conveyed by the Report of the Inspector-General, is exceedingly scandalous. I have no doubt it will receive the attention of the Government of India as well as of the Government of the Punjab. What I wish to know is whether that Report has been brought to the attention of the noble Earl, and if he can assure your Lordships that careful attention will be drawn, not only in the Punjab but in the rest of India, to the fact that scandals are proved to be prevailing in the Punjab precisely of the kind alleged in the Report—an organised system of corruption of the lower ranks of the prison administration whereby practically any prisoner whose relations would pay for him would get anything he desired except possibly female society, while those persons who did not submit to blackmail were subjected to punishments. I have no doubt whatever that those matters will receive most careful attention, but I trust we shall have a further assurance that there will be a further general inquiry into the rest of the administration of the gaols.

Akali Disturbances.

I have read a statement made by the noble Lord in another place with regard to the Akali disturbances. Two or three years ago the condition of things in the Punjab with regard to the Akali disturbances was most unsatisfactory, and as the late Leader of the House, Lord Curzon, observed when I brought matters to his notice in this House:—“.....and it is evident there must have been regrettable mismanagement somewhere to have brought about a state of affairs in which you have bodies of Sikh fanatics marching about the country and having to be shot down because they are resisting the legitimate decrees of Government.” All of us who have taken an interest in Indian affairs note with great satisfaction that recently there appear to have been none of these unfortunate conflicts between the Akali Sikhs and the Government which we were accustomed to hear of nearly every month two or three years ago. Seeing that the previous state of affairs was credited to mismanagement, we ought to be satisfied that affairs in the Punjab are now being administered in an efficient manner, and we ought to be glad of that fact. The noble Earl said that the final condition of affairs was at present satisfactory but that the Sikhs were disputing among themselves with a certain amount of liveliness as to how their differences were to be settled. I hope he will be able to tell us that the liveliness is not at all likely to break out again in practical action, such as occurred in the Punjab previously, and has occurred in other parts of India, arising out of religious differences.

The Bengal Ordinance.

In connection with matters which have interested your Lordships in former debates I shall be glad if he can give us information with regard to the upshot of the operation of what is known as the Bengal Ordinance, where special powers are given to the Government to deal with the organisation of anarchic crime. We have not heard lately of any recrudescence of that crime, and I shall be glad if he will give us a statement as to how that Ordinance has worked—whether there has been recently any necessity to take further action under it, and whether, among those persons who were interned or imprisoned under it, it has been found possible to release any number on giving satisfactory assurances.

Hindu-Muslim Disturbances.

Then I come to the question of the disturbances about which we have heard a good deal lately in the Press—disturbances arising largely out of antagonism between the Muslim and Hindu communities. Those reports come to us in the Press in a manner which does not convey very much real information as to their significance and origin. We are told that there was an organised band which attacked a Hindu procession, or that the Hindus organised a disturbance in front of a mosque. I wish the noble Earl would give us, if he is able to do so, some deeper diagnosis of what is really the origin of these disturbances. We had in this House yesterday an interesting little commentary on the question of riots in connection with the Criminal Justice (Increase of Penalties) Bill, and it was pointed out that a riot in English law is really analysable into three processes—unlawful assembly, then rout, and then riot. I want to go back to the origin and cause of the riot. Where is the unlawful assembly? Where are these things concerted, and

by what instigation? There is some kind of understanding that a disturbance shall take place which results in a body of persons with long staves appearing in the streets, prepared to beat any one belonging to an opposing faction. I wish to know if the noble Earl has any information as to the sources of the disturbances.

Are they religious, or are they political, aimed at destroying members of the electorate of the opposition? Or are they of a wider character? That is to say, are they really disturbances got up for the purpose of criminal disorder, for the purpose of creating disorder in which there can be robbery or old grudges can be paid off—because I have seen some indications in the communications from India that the Government of India are taking the view that there is now in Calcutta a large body of rather turbulent disorderly and criminal people, who flock in from the country, prepared for any kind of disorder and disturbance. Therefore it seems possible that those are the three sources of the instigation of these riots and I shall be glad if the noble Earl has been able to discern and diagnose in what respect those various causes contribute. I will say no more upon the question of disturbances. I have indicated the points on which I shall be very glad if we can have information.

The Reforms Question.

Finally, the noble Earl will, I hope, be able to tell us something with regard to what I may call strictly the political situation. When the noble Earl last addressed your Lordships on the subject of India he made a very straightforward and in my opinion a very proper and liberal statement of his position with regard to the constitutional questions. I had urged that the Government should take into consideration at an early date, in view of the Report of the Muddiman Committee, the question whether the Constitution could not be made more workable, because it was obvious on the face of it that there were elements of that Constitution which really it was almost impossible to work for the purposes for which, and in the spirit in which, it was unquestionably designed. My colleagues in the late Government and myself, in all the public utterances and writings which we have given vent to on this subject, have invariably taken the view that although there might be unsatisfactory features in the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution, the best policy for the Nationalist Party in India was to go in and make the best of them; that by doing so they would be able to use the existing Constitution for such purpose as it could be used for, and that bona fide co-operation in its working would be the best demonstration and the best test of those elements in which it was really defective and unworkable.

In response to that the noble Earl said that the question of the further consideration of this matter was entirely open, but that for his part he urged that there should be responsive co-operation and that the best service which Indian Nationalists could do to their country was to co-operate responsibly in working the present Constitution. That was a perfectly fair demand to make. I should be very glad if the noble Earl can tell us whether there has really been any material response to that and whether he sees in the present situation any signs of encouragement that the response will go on. That is the point upon which I should be glad if he can give us some information. I am not moving for Papers. I have raised this question simply for the purpose of eliciting information for your Lordships, and possibly others of your Lordships will contribute further inquiry upon subjects on which they desire information.

The Secretary of State for India (the Earl of BIRKENHEAD):—My Lords, the noble Lord, following his usual very courteous and I think very convenient practice, acquainted me with the particular question upon which he desired information. I am, therefore, as a preliminary to the few general observations that I shall find it proper to make, able to deal so far as I can with the interrogations which the Noble Lord has put to me. First in the order of his questions I will place that which he addressed to me with reference to the coercive action taken against the Bengali terrorists. I have never concealed my view that the whole country, and indeed the Empire, owes a considerable debt to the Labour Government at the moment when the noble Lord discharged the responsibility which I undertake to-day for the courageous action which, acting in concert with the late Viceroy, Lord Reading, they undertook. I inherited that policy from the noble Lord as *hereditas perhaps damnosa*, but certainly necessary, and I have attempted in this particular matter to carry on the policy which the noble Lord bequeathed to me and in the wisdom of which I was, and am, entirely acquiescent.

Bengal Arrests.

I will now give the noble Lord the information on that point for which he asks. At the end of 1924, there had been made 46 arrests under the Regulation of 1818 and 65

under the Ordinance of 1924. From that date up to June 30, 1926 there have been 42 further arrests, of which one was under the Regulation and the rest were under the Ordinance or the Act which continued the Ordinance. Nineteen of these were made after October 1 last year. The noble Lord is naturally anxious to know how these 153 captives have been treated, and I will give that information. Of the 47 State prisoners under the Regulation, 31 have been transferred to detention under the Ordinance—a step which I know meets with the approval of the noble Lord, and which was taken so that they might be domiciled in villages instead of being confined in gaols. The remaining 16 are still in prison. I have, therefore, to account for 137 prisoners under the Ordinance and the Act of 1925, that is to say, 65 arrested in 1924, 41 arrested later, and 31 transferred from being State prisoners. Of these, only 59 are now in gaol; 54 are required to live in specified villages other than their own homes; 12 are obliged to live in their own homes; 9 have been released; one killed himself; and two have been convicted of ordinary offences under the law and are undergoing normal sentences. There were thus on June 30 of this year 125 persons remaining under control under the Act of 1925.

I may be told—though I doubt whether I shall be told from any responsible source—that nine releases are very few. But I have to remind the House that within the period covered by the brief survey I have attempted there have been many incidents which must make any Government cautious in its decisions. Some members of the conspiracy have been discovered in possession of a technically very complete apparatus for forging currency notes, others have been convicted of dealing in smuggled weapons with Chinamen—a purpose which seems remote from any legitimate aspirations; nine of them were convicted of conspiracy and the possession, for purposes of that conspiracy in or near Calcutta, of revolvers, cartridges, bombs, and chemicals; and a tenth, an associate of the nine, of being concerned in importing arms from overseas. These ten men after conviction, in the Alipore Gaol, murdered the police officer who had done special service in fighting this terror. As long as I discharge these responsibilities I am not, in the face of these facts, much moved by criticisms of my conduct in hesitating to release or advise the release of men belonging to such associations.

But the Government of India has throughout, in my judgment, exhibited in this matter every quality of reasonableness. It has shown itself ready to use clemency where clemency is safe. It has, for instance, lately remitted the remainder of the sentence on five men convicted in the years 1913 and 1916 of offences committed under the direction of these same organisations, and the only condition attached to the remission was that the convicts should keep clear of the terrorist movement and report immediately to the authority any attempt made to draw them into it. Moreover, I think I ought to add that seven of the nine releases have been made in the three months from February to April of this year and the process of transfer from gaols to villages is always in progress. It is therefore, I think quite clear, and will be so to the noble Lord, that each case is under constant examination and that detention is not extended beyond the time and degree required. I have only to add upon this particular matter that the present Viceroy is fully acquainted with my views in this matter and will, I am sure, take such action or make such inquiries or proposals as may seem to his Government to be desirable and not to be dangerous to the public.

The Sikh Trouble.

I will deal next with the question which the noble Lord put to me with reference to the Sikh disturbances. The prolonged struggle over the management of Sikh Gurdwaras, which had at one time the unfortunate effect of putting a large body in that community in open strife with the Government, has at last been terminated, we may hope, by the enactment of a law passed without any opposition, for controlling Sikh endowments and religious property in the Punjab. So far as I can judge at this distance from the scene, only a few irreconcilables are still fighting against the will of their leaders, being bent on keeping the grievance open and preventing the peace which might be expected to follow the settlement and release, upon promise of co-operation, of almost all the men who were under trial for their acts of lawlessness during the agitation. We may, therefore, I feel sure, safely congratulate the Governor of the Province on the success with which he and his officers have contributed to this happy ending, if I am not too sanguine in seeing the restoration of order, an end of the crisis which has occasioned great anxiety not only to the Government of India but to the Government of this country.

Communal Troubles.

Now I approach a graver topic to which the noble Lord has specifically requested my attention. It is that of the outbreak of renewed communal disturbances in an embitt-

tered and violent form in so many different parts of India. It would indeed be true to say that this recrudescence has been the most marked circumstance to which I ought to draw attention now, twelve months almost to a week since I last addressed your Lordships upon the general topic of Indian affairs. When I made my first speech as Secretary of State, there was no alarming situation so far as the bitterness of communal disturbance was concerned, and quite other topics engaged almost the whole of the speech to which I found it necessary to ask the attention of your Lordships. In the last twelve months undoubtedly there has been a renewal in the bitterest form of disturbances, violence and bloodshed which must always occasion the deepest anxiety to those who are charged with the responsibility for order and good government in India.

The Noble Lord invited me to a somewhat profound and difficult analysis of this topic. I will certainly not refuse as far as I can, though fully conscious of its difficulties, to afford to the Noble Lord any assistance which it is in my power to give in the researches which he has recently made upon this subject. But, if I sought for hours by every ingenuity of speech of which I could make myself the master to explain what is fundamental in British policy upon this matter, I could not equal or in any way attempt to discharge my task so completely as by citing the famous passage from Queen Victoria's Proclamation on the assumption, in 1858, of the Government of India by the Crown—a great and memorable moment. If your Lordships will be so patient, the passage is not long and I will read it, because it is expressive of the spirit and the only spirit in which the Government of India, in so far as its duties are undertaken in this country, is approached:—

“Firmly relying Ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of Religion, We disclaim alike the Right and the Desire to impose Our Convictions on any of Our Subjects. We declare it to be Our Royal Will and Pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted by Reason of their Religious Faith or Observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the Law; and We do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under Us that they abstain from all interference with the Religious Belief or Worship of any of Our Subjects on pain of Our highest Displeasure.”

That alone was, and is, the high purpose with which those who have responsibility in the Government of India and those who have responsibility in this country approached what surely has from time to time proved one of the most difficult problems which in the East have ever baffled and perplexed Western civilisation.

An observation falls to be made upon the circumstance that it should have been found necessary to make these matters so plain 70 years ago. Its inclusion in the Proclamation reminds us that 70 years ago, no less than to-day, the possibility of antagonism based upon differences of religious view was one of the live and formidable issues which the Administration of that date had to face, for the disclaimer in the first sentence of the passage which I have read (though no doubt fears had been expressed of an official proselytising Christianity and, indeed, were in part the cause of the Mutiny) was not the main, and certainly not the most important, purpose of the announcement; but it was nevertheless thought prudent to explain what was the view taken by the British Government of that day on these matters.

Having regard to the fact that on the Continent of Europe even toleration is a plant of comparatively recent, and not even yet of too robust a growth, it would be astonishing if it were a well-established rule of life in India, where, moreover, it must constantly be remembered, the conflict lies, not as it has lain in Europe through the centuries between doctrinally separated sects of the followers of Christ, but between the adherents of two fundamentally different and in many respects opposite systems of religion, whose religious differences practically—and this is the gravity of the point—are continuous with racial differences. The superficial grounds for friction between the Hindu and the Muslim in the practice of their respective rites are obvious and well known.

Pre-war History of Disturbances.

It is sufficient for us only to mention the duty enjoined at certain festivals to engage in animal sacrifices, with a particular preference for the sacrifice of oxen, and to contrast this with the Hindu's passionate conviction of the sanctity of that animal and the unutterable sacrilege involved in causing its violent death. Or, you may take the Hindu's duty to worship idols and contrast it with the Moslem abhorrence of any action or practice savouring of idolatry. Or again, you may examine the boisterous rites which form so conspicuous an element in much of the Hindu worship with the solemnity of Moslem prayer. Nor, indeed, can the Moslem be expected to forget that the Raj—which the British Raj displaced not so very long ago in the immemorial memories of the East—was

a Moslem Raj, and that with the collapse of the Mogul Empire the followers of his creed in India have fallen, for reason it would take me too long to analyse here. They have fallen from a condition of political domination to that of a minority which is at a clear disadvantage in the competitive struggle for existence under modern conditions not merely in the matter of numbers, but also, and more markedly, of efficiency in the political field.

In the old days of paternal administration, when the British Government was in fact as in name the father and the mother of its Indian subjects, that status of the backward child caused the Moslem no great concern. He was content to trust no parental impartiality to see that he received reasonable treatment, and the question of what would happen to him when, if ever, the state of pupilage came to an end had not emerged in his mind into the field of practical politics. In these conditions religious or communal antagonisms have always been one of the causes which have tended to lead to riots or to mob violence in India and, naturally, the tendency has been greatest on those occasions when the revolutions of the Moslem calendar have brought together into one season the chief feast and fast of the two creeds—a condition which happily only recurs at intervals of about 30 years—or, again, when Hindu marriage processions, with their attendant music, happen to collide with Moslem mourning processions or even disturb Moslem worshippers in their mosques; or, again, when the Hindus of a village have combined to endeavour to prevent the cow sacrifices of the Bakr-Id.

Although during the last 40 years there have been several occasions on which Hindu-Moslem conflicts have been on a serious scale leading to a considerable loss of life, it is on the whole true to say that until the last five years their occurrence has been sporadic and, with one exception, probably fortuitous. And when I say fortuitous in this connection, I mean not the result of organisation. The exception which I have in my mind was the serious cow-killing riots of 1893 in the eastern districts of the United Provinces and in Bihar, which seem to have been due, if you examine their intensity and scope, to propaganda of the curious native-Indian kind which has sometimes, though rarely, proved to be recurrent in Indian history. If I may make my summary of this period complete, I would say that the Pax Britannica and the watchful care of the police and magistracy were in co-operation, adequate to keep in check the mob violence which proceeded from this particular cause no less than that which proceeded from the other chief cause for organised violence in India—disputes about the ownership of land.

The Lucknow Pact.

Such was the condition of affairs in this matter, as I read the history of the period, until the War; though even before the War signs had not been wanting that the Mahomedan had begun to realise, some years before 1914, that the political future of India was not static and that he could no longer afford to leave the political future of his own community to the care of chance and of a benevolent and unprejudiced Government. Hitherto he had associated with the Congress, and indeed had held rather conspicuously aloof from political agitation of all kinds. But in 1906, with the Morley-Minto reforms looming into sight, he took the first steps towards forming his own Congress—the All-India Moslem League—and in October, 1906, a deputation of the principal men of the community, headed by the Aga Khan, obtained from Lord Minto an assurance that the Moslem community was entitled to separate representation on the Council and, by reason of its political importance, to representation greater than mere numerical proportions could justify—a promise or admission, not to be disputed because it is indisputable, to which the community has grappled itself as to a sheet anchor ever since.

Two years of the War and of the Indian sacrifice of life and treasure involved were sufficient to produce in India, as they produced elsewhere, much ferment of ideas in men's minds, and when it was known that changes must be looked for in the system of government the Hindu quickly realised that an essential condition of successful political activity in this direction was that he should carry the Moslem with him in his demands. He realised, too, that this condition could not be secured unless the two communities could come to terms as to their respective claims to representation. Hence, the much advertised "Lucknow Pact" of Christmas, 1916, which was an agreement between the All-India Congress Committee and the Committee of the All-India Moslem League to give Mahomedan minorities in certain Provinces enhanced representation in Legislatures and other elected bodies at the expense of the Mahomedan majorities in Bengal and the Punjab. Hence also the apparent agreement of advanced Hindu and Mahomedan opinion upon the Congress-League scheme of reforms which was formulated as the demands of United India for political advance in almost the same month of the same year.

But the Lucknow Pact of 1916, like Mr. C. R. Das's more recent Bengal Pact, brought with it not peace but a sword. A few months sufficed to show that the Moslem League was not unanimous as to the soundness of the policy of furthering the agitation for Swaraj, and that the advanced section was far from representing general opinion in the League and still less general Moslem opinion outside it. The Pact was attacked from both sides—by Hindus as an unjustified surrender to Moslem obstinacy and by Moslems as a wholly inadequate recognition of their claims—while the attempts which the more advanced Moslem leaders had made to persuade their followers to abandon the sacrifice of cattle (surely, I should have thought, a hopeless crusade) produced no response. Meanwhile the fall of Baghdad in March, 1917, and other events in the War were providing material which the more extreme leaders were able subsequently to organise into what became known as the Caliphate movement.

The War-Time Outbreaks.

In this tense state of opinion serious Hindu-Moslem riots occurred in September, 1917, in Bihar and the United Provinces, and again in March, 1918 when the outbreaks, within your Lordships' recollection, at Kartarpur and Shahabad were exceptionally violent. In September, 1918, again there were serious Hindu-Moslem disturbances in Calcutta, where fire-arms proved to be necessary in the hands of the police to restore order. With the termination of the War the Moslems found renewed cause of anxiety in the Peace terms for which at that period the Turkish nation was agitating, while the future of the Moslem Holy Places and the Caliphate continued equally to be agitated. Within six months from the date of the Armistice the feelings of both communities were lacerated by the measures taken to suppress the Punjab disturbances of April, 1919.

This was the situation—and I thought it worth while some what laboriously to read this to you—which gave Gandhi and the Ali brothers their opportunity. For the next three and a half years the non-co-operation campaign, though it was accompanied by widespread disorder and considerable bloodshed, united the two communities against the Government and diverted them from attacks upon each other, though even during this period there were communal disturbances at Agra and Philibit and in Rangoon in the year 1920. Early in 1922 Gandhi, whose influence, as I read the history of those days, had been on the wane for some months, was incarcerated, and in September of that year the Mahomedans made violent assaults upon the Hindus in Multan. Since then hardly a month has passed without the occurrence somewhere—and quite often at several places simultaneously—of serious trouble, each outbreak of which, not excluding, of course, the appalling Moplah rebellion, has left an increasing legacy of bitterness and, among the less responsible elements, a determination for reprisal.

Leaders and Revivalism.

It would be tedious, even if it were possible within any margin of time open to me, to enumerate the various platforms upon which during the last three years the leaders of both communities have expressed their abhorrence of these occurrences, and their recognition of what is, after all, a plain truism, that their occurrence is an insuperable bar to future political progress; yet, at the same time that these demands have been made, responsible persons in both communities have been either fostering, or at all events not discouraging, a kind of militant revivalism on the part of their co-religionists, the first result of which is effectively to prevent any return to tolerance and harmony and which inevitably means reaction in the outlook of both communities. It is, in consequence, impossible to deny that the present state of communal relations is—to some extent which I cannot precisely define, but I make the affirmation quite plainly—connived in by the leaders of the two communities, and this circumstance involves a distinction as novel as it is sinister between the outbreaks of to-day and the outbreaks of the early period.

Reforms and Communalism.

It would, therefore, in my judgment, be untrue, for the reasons that I have given, to deny all connection between the reforms and the present state of tension between Hindu and Moslem. But at the same time it is a grossly inadequate explanation to attribute it either to the existence of the reforms or to their nature. The historical sketch that I have hurriedly attempted should be sufficient to dispose of that conception. So far as a tangible cause can be assigned—attempting the analysis to which the noble Lord invited me—it is to be found in the general unsettlement of ideas and of material conditions which followed in the wake of the War and which gave—for good or for ill, who knows?—its final quietus to the system of paternal Government which the British Government had carried to high perfection during the preceding half

century, and which thereby led the component elements of the Indian population, Hindu and Moslem, Brahmin and non-Brahmin, landlord and tenant, outcast and casteman, to take stock of their new position in relation to their neighbours, and to insist with growing and particular vehemence on their own rights and claims.

It is, no doubt, true that the system of communal representation upon which the present—as was the last—Indian electoral system is based tends to stereotype this particular line of cleavage, but there is not the slightest ground for the assertion that, had Parliament insisted, in the teeth of opposition which would have been pursued, in framing the reforms of 1919 without that feature, the relations between Hindu and Moslem would have become more amicable than of late they have been. The strong probability, almost the certainty, is that they would have become much more violently embittered. One result of the democratic ideals disseminated in India as elsewhere as the outcome of the War—that vague and devastating post-War sentiment to which we owe so much disaster—was the realisation that the principle of majority rule has now to be reckoned with, and that in politics, as in warfare, victory tends to lie with the big battalions. To this, I am sure, is due the proselytising tendencies which both communities have so markedly shown during the past three years.

I regretted a little that the noble Lord—whose language has been so moderate in the years in which I have held this trust and whose attitude in this House and elsewhere has invariably been so helpful—should have used an expression which, unless I misunderstood him, indicate the view that there had been in the past years some partiality or predilection, on behalf either of the Government of India or the Government here—

Lord Olivier: May I interrupt? Is the noble Earl referring to anything that I said in my speech?

The Earl of Birkenhead: No, I was referring to a letter that the noble Lord wrote, and if the noble Lord tells me that the construction that I place upon it is wrong, I will not add another word on the topic, because I do not desire—why should I?—to pursue it. I will tell the noble Lord quite plainly what I have in my mind. I read an interesting letter which the noble Lord contributed to "The Times," and I certainly placed upon it this construction—and he will tell me whether I was right or wrong—that the Government of India or the Government here had in the past few years shown some partiality to the Moslem in this long rivalry which I have attempted historically to reconstruct to-day. I do not often make mistakes on such points, and I should be surprised if the noble Lord disputed the estimate that I have formed of the impression which he desired to give. I would assure your Lordships and the noble Lord that it really is not true. The noble Lord would certainly not advance the claim that, while he was Secretary of State for India, he showed any preference for the Moslems as against the Hindus. The noble Lord, so far as my information extends—and I have access to many documents—was scrupulously impartial between both communities, as was his duty. Nor, indeed, do I think that the noble Lord will charge against me, in anything that I have said or anything that I have done, any deviation from the same exact standard of impartiality.

Of this I am certain, that the noble Lord would be the last man in the world to say this of those who have been the Viceroy through that time, of Lord Reading, whom we welcome here to-day in this house, and who discharged so many important duties and confronted so many great anxieties during his Viceroyalty. No one, I am sure—certainly not the noble Lord—would say of him that any such partiality was ever exhibited. As for the present Viceroy, whose elevated speech on these topics, couched in high and noble language, has made, I believe, a profound impression in India and breathed in every sentence the highest conceptions of idealism, which have run like a golden thread through the whole of our historic associations with this peninsula—certainly the noble Lord will not accuse him of that partiality.

I affirm plainly two things. In the first place, there never has been a moment when the Government of India has addressed itself to these difficult questions in any spirit except that of holding the scales equally, justly and impartially between the disputants. And I affirm in the second place—and this is not less important—that Moslems and Hindus alike realise this truth, and it may interest your Lordships to know—I give you no precise figures, though I could do so if time served—that over and over again, when there has been the gravest alarm because of the recrudescence of these outbreaks, both parties have approached the British authorities and asked that they should send representatives to deal with the disturbances that have arisen. I could afford your Lordships many striking illustrations, some of them couched in very dramatic language, of this circumstance.

No, my Lords, there has been in our part no partiality. There will be no partiality, nor do I think it even worth while to make more than a passing observation upon an even baser charge which has been made. It is the charge that the Government of India, or we in this country, do not contemplate with disfavour the accession to our anxieties which these disturbances produce. Indeed, the expression has been quoted, as if it were part of our policy, *Divide et Impera*. Little have they studied the history of our association with India if they think that it was in that spirit that we have discharged the responsibilities into which we almost accidentally drifted. Little indeed upon a wider stage, have they appreciated the political genius of this nation, which has created and maintained that loose and amazing structure, the British Empire, if they think it was by petty and squalid maxims of this kind, by low and cunning tricks, that our forefathers established, and those who came after maintained and we still discharge our inherited duties.

Does any sensible or experienced person believe that we who are trustees of order in that sub-continent—does any one believe that it can reflect anything but discredit upon our fiduciary duties if we cannot even induce those who live with us there to maintain order and avoid bloodshed? The power which is responsible in India has nothing but discredit to reap from the spread of these disorders, and if I have ever thought it necessary to say a word upon this topic it is because it has been these defamatory charges still continue to be made by those who ought to know, and in my suspicion do know better.

Lord Olivier: If the noble Earl has finished with that passage, I shall have to ask him at the conclusion of the debate to allow me to say a word in reply.

The Earl of Birkenhead: I should gladly have given way if the noble Lord had told me that I had misconceived the object of his observations, and I should not have pursued the topic.

Lord Olivier: To interrupt the noble Earl while he was in full career would have been a little difficult.

The Panjab Jail Committee's Report.

The Earl of Birkenhead: I shall be glad to listen, as I am sure your Lordships will, to any observations which the noble Lord wishes to make on the subject. He asked me to deal with another specific subject and that was the Punjab Commission's Report on the goals. He is correct in saying that on an earlier discussion I had not full information, and I do not think the noble Lord himself had. I ought, I think, frankly to deal with the matter. Attention was publicly drawn to the treatment of prisoners in the Punjab goals by some allegations made in the newspaper "*Bandemataram*" in October, 1923, that prisoners in the Multan goal were subjected to indignities and cruelties, notably those of "*Gidar Kutt*." It was alleged that there was indiscriminate beating by convict warders. A suit for defamation was brought against the newspaper by the gaoler, and the Court of the Sub-Judge awarded him nominal damages, but held the greater part of the libel to be true.

The case formed the subject of the motion which the noble Lord made in the month of August, 1925. Thereafter, with my concurrence a Committee was appointed by the Punjab Government in November last to inquire into the allegations of the practice of unauthorised punishments and indulgences in the Punjab goals and generally into the state of discipline among the staff and inmates and the adequacy and effectiveness of the supervision over both and proposed remedies for defects and the means of stopping the mal-practices. The Committee consisted of a member of the Indian Civil Service, Mr. Lumden, an Indian Judge of the Lahore Court, and an Indian barrister. The Committee reported in the early spring of this year, and some of its findings were, I confess, of a very disquieting character. The most important of its general conclusions was that unauthorised punishments were frequently awarded and that there was ample evidence of the existence of unauthorised indulgences. It stated that the discipline of the goals visited was merely superficial, and while various causes of this were set out, the root cause was held to be that a prisoner could, by mere payment of money, provide himself with all sorts of luxuries. It was also stated that over-crowding was prevalent and that various improvements of the staff were needed, while the classification of prisoners was found to be defective.

It was naturally agreed between myself and the Viceroy that this was a Report which ought to be published. It was so published on May 28, the resolution of the Punjab Government being published at the same time showing the action taken or contemplated upon the Report. While warning has been issued against unauthorised punishments and indulgences the Punjab Government recognises that radical measures for the improvement of the supervising and executive agencies in the goals are necessary. Imagine that the

noble Lord has read that Report. Unless he has any doubt as to the completeness and the drastic character of the recommendations made I do not think it necessary to pursue the topic in detail, but the Viceroy is in complete agreement with the Secretary of State that almost all those recommendations must be carried out, and I am sure that the noble Lord will realise that those who have been responsible have realised how grave was the state of affairs disclosed and that every conceivable step that can be taken to set that particular house in order will be taken.

India and Afghanistan.

Now I approach the last topic but one with which I must shortly deal. The noble Lord asked me whether I have any observations to make on the subject of our relations with Afghanistan and the Amir. For many generations this topic has been one of delicacy and of difficulty, and I must deal with it as so important a topic in our foreign affairs must be dealt with, by any Minister even though he be the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and with an infinitely greater degree of caution when he who addresses Your Lordships has no such responsibility. In the first place, let me say that our relations with the Amir continue to be of the most friendly character and I take this opportunity of saying with as much formality as I can that the excellence of the relations which at the moment subsist between that Monarch and ourselves is in no small measure due to the tact and ability which have been shown by Sir Francis Humphreys, our representative in Afghanistan. He has indeed deserved well of this country. Many changes have taken place in Afghanistan and in the general character of the problems jointly founded upon Afghanistan which have from time to time engaged the attention of the British Governments. But this at least I may make plain. The concern of Great Britain and India in Afghanistan is not less than it was in 1885. It is not less than it was in 1907 when it brought us to an agreement with Russia, or in 1921, when we made a Treaty of good neighbourliness with Afghanistan. If such interests as we have in Afghanistan were ever seriously threatened we should not, I believe, find ourselves without the means of safeguarding them.

The Reforms Question.

Now I have only one subject upon which the noble Lord invited me to make some observations. He spoke in kindly terms of the observations I made a year ago upon the subject of the effect, as far as it was clearly discernible at that period, of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. The noble Lord did me no more than justice when he said it was my purpose in speaking a year ago to exercise, as far as any words of mine could do it, the spirit of distrust which had misguided and perverted so many intelligent men into an attempt to make the constitution absolutely unworkable. That was a strange mood for a nation to pass through. It could, indeed, be made the subject of debatable argument either that the constitutional reforms went too far or that the constitutional reforms did not go far enough; but it surely was a strange policy for those who held that the reforms had not gone far enough to render if they could, ridiculous and futile that which had been given in an experiment which was certainly one of the most novel and one of the boldest that any country, the centre of an Empire, had ever, in my reading of human history, attempted. But such was the strange fact to which we had to accommodate ourselves. There was no method of dealing with the difficulties which emerged except by reliance upon the precautionary measures which we had not omitted to introduce into the legislation which gave the constitution. And so the attempt to destroy and render ridiculous the constitution failed.

But when I spoke a year ago, I plainly indicated that, so far at least as I was concerned—and so far as I could read the minds of my colleagues, I believe it would have been true also of them—we were always open to conversion and to conviction if and when we saw among the men, able men, who take part in politics in India a genuine desire to make the best of the existing constitution. We did not indeed, ever desire, expect or invite that they should say it was the Constitution which satisfied them. We never asked them to deprive themselves of any one of the legitimate rights of an ordinary Parliamentary opposition, if they chose in bitter invective to disparage the adequacy of that which we had given them. After all, bitter invective has been used in many Western Parliaments without doing any one any particular harm. But it was, indeed, futile to expect that we should treat a general scheme of non-co-operation, which carried in its womb the clear determination to wreck the Constitution which, with painful construction, had been formed in this country—that we should treat it as a claim for making prematurely, according to the terms of that Constitution itself, changes and developments in it. Well, if anybody expected that of an English Government he had indeed given inattentive study to the history of the British people,

What I said a year ago I say again to-day, subject only to one observation which I will presently make. I do believe that I discern to-day a realisation in many quarters in India not lacking in influence that this policy was ill-conceived, that it was predestined to failure, that it is failing, if it has not already failed, and I think that I see, though neither confidently nor dogmatically do I proclaim it, the growth of a realisation that the only sensible and patriotic course to follow at the moment for a citizen of India who believes that there are potential qualities which will one day make the inhabitants of that country qualified to take in hand their own responsible destinies is one of sympathetic co-operation with those in this country who have asked for sympathetic co-operation and for nothing else.

Reforms and Communal Differences.

I said that the observations that I made upon this point must be read with a single caution. I have already spoken at considerable length upon the existence of communal disturbance in India. It is necessary to bring that topic into relation with the subject with which I am at this moment concerned. You cannot divorce one from the other. And, indeed, even those who are most enthusiastic in the belief that the pace fixed in the constitutional instrument ought to be accelerated—they, I think, themselves cannot be blind to the relevance of that other topic to which I have adverted. It is plain that any impartial and competent tribunal that was set up in order to revise the Constitution, in order to advise Parliament as to whether the powers already conceded should be extended or not must be most vitally affected by the question: What at the present moment is the relationship between these two great dominant sects? Is it of such a kind as to suggest that at this moment it would be wise in their own interest and in relation to their own desires to accelerate the moment at which a decision fraught with consequences so grave and perhaps so durable should be taken?

Therefore, on all these grounds, I am brought back to the topic, which indeed has principally engaged me in the course of the observations for which I have asked your Lordship's indulgence. Not only for the credit of the Empire, but in the very interest which they most loudly profess, those who have an influence in both communities would be, indeed, well advised if they set their house in order by composing their bitter differences. If they enable those of us who would gladly restore better and kindlier feelings with all sections of Indian thought to put forward a case which would have some element of plausibility for that acceleration of the statutory date, they would do a great service to that cause in which they vehemently believe and they would at the same time render it easier for those of us who in this country and in India have responsibility to restore a kindlier and friendlier basis to our mutual relations.

The Marquess of READING: My Lords, I trust that it may not be thought inopportune that I should at the present moment, occupying as I do a position of greater freedom and less responsibility with regard to India, make some observations, although they will necessarily be brief especially after the speech of my noble friend the Secretary of State and the very exhaustive examination that he has made into the causes, in particular, of the Hindu-Muslim disturbances. I should have troubled you but for a moment or two had it not been that I was deeply concerned at noting that there was a disposition in a quarter from which I least expected it to attribute favouritism on the part of British officialism, as the phrase was.

Lord OLIVIER: My Lords, if the noble Marquess is going into that point I think, if your Lordships will allow me, I had better reply at once to the question raised by the noble Earl. I am in a position of some difficulty because the noble Earl referred to something which was written in "The Times" and I have not with me the extracts from "The Times" to which he referred. But the noble Earl stated, and I gather that the noble Marquess was also taking the same view, that I had imputed to the Government of India that it had exercised favouritism in its dealings as between Muslims and Hindus. I have made no such suggestion and I entirely disclaim any feeling or belief to that effect. I am perfectly confident that every official has set himself and every Government of India has deliberately and of set policy set itself to deal fairly as between those two communities. I make no such charge and it never entered my mind to make such a charge.

Having said that much, I am rather under the obligation of dealing, and I hope very slightly, with what I actually did say. May I say that I may perhaps have used words which, had I had an opportunity of revising the proof of my letter, I might have modified slightly. But what I did say—and it is based upon what I have heard from a great many Englishmen who have served in India and from a great many Indians who have a very good reputation in India—was that there is an official bias in favour of the

Mahomedan community. I did not in the slightest degree mean that there was a bias which was exhibited in the action of the Government of the country. What I meant—and this is more or less an impression which I have received, as I say, from what Englishmen have told me and what Indians have told me—was that the British official classes, both civil and military, in India have a higher appreciation of the virtues of the Mahomedan section of the population than they generally feel about the Hindus. I wrote a further letter to "The Times" in which I hope that I had made that clear. I think the grounds of sympathy are what I would call the martial and other virtues and many other grounds of sympathy. I do think it is a fair statement to make that predominantly Englishmen who serve in India have a higher appreciation of the Muslim community and think them more capable of dominion than they think the Hindus and especially the Bengalis are. That is what I meant by official bias.

There is another thing to which I wish to refer. The noble Lord referred to the suggestion—I do not know whether he imputed it to me—that the Government of India had followed out the policy of "Divide et Impera." I do not make that suggestion at all; but the feeling which I had encountered and which I had underlined in my mind in that letter was something of which I will give you an example. When the Hindu-Muslim pact was made it was a pact which strengthened the probability of an advance towards Swaraj policy in India. A very large number of persons, officials and others in India, regard the advance towards the self-governing Swaraj policy as a movement deleterious to British interests in India, and I say confidently that when the Hindu-Muslim pact broke up there was a considerable amount of satisfaction felt, and was expressed in what I may call the anti-Swaraj Press in India, that the pact had broken up. I do not think it went further than that. I will not now go into the question of these faction fights, but there was a distinct satisfaction on the part of those persons both in this country and in India who were opposed to the Nationalist movement that the pact had broken up and that there should be political dissensions among those affected. I will not carry it further than that.

The Marquess of READING: I am sure your Lordships will have heard with pleasure and with some satisfaction the disclaimer on the part of the noble Lord of imputing anything in the nature of favouritism or of official bias for the Mahomedan interest or element in India. For my part, as I am sure is the case with all your Lordships, whatever is said by the noble Lord as to his intention carries conviction beyond all question, and I do not pause for a moment to discuss what was in his mind inasmuch as he has told us and that disposes of the matter beyond all arguments. I am now only concerned with what the noble Lord said, not what he intended, and not for the purpose of striving to cast the faintest doubt upon the noble Lord's meaning as intended by him but in order that I may refute a statement in writing which appeared in a letter in "The Times" subscribed by one who had held the position of Secretary of State for India and whose words, therefore, carry great weight in India notwithstanding that he is not now in office.

British Official Bias.

If your Lordships will permit me, I will read his words in order that I may offer to your Lordships a few observations which I think it necessary to make and which, indeed, I hope may be transmitted to India in order that I might clear to India my own views. This is the noble Lord's statement:—

"But there are other causes of the increasing faction fighting. No one with any close acquaintance of Indian affairs will be prepared to deny that on the whole there is a predominant bias in British officialism in India in favour of the Moslem community, partly on the ground of closer sympathy, but more largely as a makeweight against Hindu nationalism."

Now I cannot but think that the words, as used, although not so intended, will be of assistance to those extremists in India who are desirous of instilling into the minds of both Hindus and Moslems that there is an undue bias in the mind of the British official and that, consequently, that quality of administration upon which in my opinion we rightly pride ourselves, and especially in relation to India—that is of justice and fairness to all irrespective of distinction either of creed or race—does not exist.

I do feel that it becomes necessary that I should tell your Lordships that this is a charge—not in these words, of course, not so moderately framed or so carefully qualified as the noble Lord's observation in the letter to "The Times"—which is constantly made against the Government of India; consequently, also, against the Government in this country. My noble friend in a few observations dealt with the charge—and as he rightly said, it merited but slight notice—which was that these communal disturbances were instigated

very often by British officials or for British interests. I do desire to say that throughout the whole period of the five years of my life in India I not only most carefully watched, but sought every opportunity of ascertaining whether there was the slightest foundation for this charge and I can tell your Lordships that I never had even the merest breath of evidence to support it. I desire to make that statement because, I confess, when I read those words my mind rebelled at the notion that any one occupying so important a position should have used language which, as I thought then, was intended to convey the notion of some bias.

I am not now, as I have already indicated, dealing with what the noble Lord intended to say. I pass that by, having finished with it. But I am dealing with the spirit that underlies it and with the sense in which it will be understood until this disclaimer of the noble Lord is read. I very much hope that it will be transmitted to India and read and understood by those who will not have lost time in taking advantage of an observation of this character.

Lord Olivier : I do not think there was anything in what I wrote which could have suggested—

Noble Lords : Order, order.

Lord Olivier : May I give an explanation ? I do not think there was anything in what I wrote that could have suggested that I had the idea that any British official had ever instigated any riot.

The Marquess of Reading : If I may say so I did not mean to suggest that. I quite agree. I do not think the words convey that, but they go so near it when it is said that on the whole there is a predominant bias in British officialism in India in favour of the Moslem community and when, at the same time, it is known that there is an extremist section in India which is very adept at reading meanings into language which we in England did not intend to convey and which, from this very language, will go on to argue—I can almost see the articles penned upon it or hear the speeches which will be made in consequences of it—"this proves what we have said—namely, that there is an official bias." And, of course, it is not a very far step from that to instigating or at least conniving in some form or other at the Hindu-Moslem disturbances. Because of the life I have led for five years, and because of the knowledge I have that every word that is used by any one in authority in this country is liable sometimes to innocent misconception or misinterpretation—unfortunately also, sometimes, to deliberate misconception and misinterpretation—I have been anxious that we should have made quite plain in your Lordships' House what was intended by the noble Lord himself, and what he meant to convey by the language that he used.

I also desired, speaking as one who was the head of the Government of India during five years, to give my testimony in order that I might refute any such suggestion or insinuation from any quarter and to assert—as I do beyond all possibility of refutation and with every challenge that I will take any document and any evidence that may be brought to me upon this charge if it were still in my power to examine it—that I am quite confident there would be no truth in the statement. May I say—not in reference to the noble Lord, who has told us what he meant, but in reference to the charges or suggestions which are so rife in India—that I doubt very much whether you who are listening to this debate realise to the full how insidious these suggestions are. The mind of the Oriental is very subtle. He is not accustomed to put into plain, precise language exactly what he means and to mean nothing more. He is rather in the habit of finding meanings which may or may not have been intended, but which would baffle perhaps any one of us. Therefore I have thought that it was desirable to deal with a matter which affected British rule in India so seriously.

Communal Societies Which Promote Differences.

I do not for a moment intend to traverse over the same ground as my noble and learned friend, who has done it so exhaustively and so much better than we could do it. I am glad that I shall have the opportunity of studying it hereafter and understanding the causes of the present Hindu-Moslem disturbances. If I were to add anything, it would merely be to say, what perhaps is already implied in some part of his observation on the later period, that the growth of Hindu societies and Mahomedan societies has tended to promote these disturbances and to intensify them. As I speak I recall a passage which I read in some observations of my noble friend Lord Sinha, who speaks with special knowledge on this subject and who is himself inclined to attribute much of the present tension to the foundation on those societies. I will not go into detail with regard to them ; it would take so long. Sufficient be it to say—and it is all I shall say on the subject—that there are leaders of political thought among Hindus who are leaders of the Hindu societies

and there are leaders of Mahomedan political thought who are leaders of the Mahomedan societies. The result is that you have societies formed with the avowed object of increasing the strength, influence and authority of a particular religion. The adherents of that religion become members of those societies for the very purpose, as I have said, of augmenting the power of their creed.

I do not wish to travel any further into this subject, save that I would ask if any one, not here but in India, still thinks that British officialism or officials are interested in fostering these Hindu-Muslim disturbances. I would like to ask, of what advantage it is to the British Government, or to the Government of India, or to the civil servant, or to the military officers who have perhaps to take part in these disturbances? I may deal with the civil servant in a word. His duty is to preserve peace. His objective is that he may have a clean sheet to hand to his Government. His main desire is to avoid trouble, and necessarily so. He is there for the purpose of preserving order and of doing all that he can for peaceful administration. So far as he is concerned, if there is any trouble it means not only grave responsibility for him if the conditions become serious, but it means endless agitation and excitement inasmuch as he may not be even quite sure that in the end he will emerge successfully from the difficulties—stupendous difficulties sometimes—that he has had to encounter.

Of the military officer I suppose there is no greater truth than to say that he detests having to intervene in civil disturbances. He does it because it is his duty. He is called upon to perform it, he takes his part and he strives to do it as well as he can. The one indisputable feature that I have found during my time in India was that the military officers exercised this very unpleasant duty when called upon with the greatest restraint, and only took steps by virtue of the position they occupied when it was apparent there was no other course open if peace was to be preserved or a disturbance was to be set at rest. The military officer has an additional anxiety about which I need not trouble to say much in debate before your Lordships, anxiety as to what is to happen if he has taken a step which might have involved loss of life. He has to trust, and rightly trust to the authorities at the head of the Government to see that when he does his duty he is also properly protected from all responsibility that may hereafter ensue.

I need not take up your Lordship's time with references to the position of the Government of India. I speak there with knowledge, inasmuch as I think I may say I was familiar with all that happened in the Government of India of any importance. I pass from the reference merely with the observation that never during the whole of the time that I was entrusted with the responsibilities of India have I seen a charge that was even worth examining in relation to officials of the Government of India or of the provinces, of having done anything which was unfair, or of having shown a bias either to the one creed or the other, or of having taken any step which could by the greatest stretch of imagination be described as conniving at or wilfully shutting their eyes to any disturbances which were about to be created. I hope your Lordships will forgive me for having taken up your time on this subject. It may be perhaps that I feel more strongly on it than you would understand for the reason that I know how serious is an insinuation or suggestion of this kind when it travels about amongst ignorant people in India in the villages, in the mofussil as it called and in various districts where there is need of spreading the light.

The Late Inspector Handyside.

I am not inclined to travel over the ground covered either by the speech of Lord Olivier or the speech of the Secretary of State, but I would like to make a few observations upon the general political situation. May I, before I do that, take the opportunity that presents itself to me of a reference to one of the most gallant men I have ever met in my life? Your Lordships are aware that unfortunately some months ago Inspector Handyside, of the North-West Frontier, lost his life in one of the many encounters that he had with tribal raiders. It was not more than a few days before I left India that I went to Peshawar and the North-West Frontier for a last visit. On that occasion I met Inspector Handyside. I must not detain you with a recital of his various exploits, but he was a most marvellous man whose courage, resourcefulness, magnanimity and highmindedness were loved and admired throughout the North-West Frontier and by the tribes against whom he had to act almost—I was going to say as much as by the tribes with whom he had to act.

I ventured to say to him, knowing his history, that it was time that he gave up going out himself. He was then at the head of the Frontier Constabulary. I suggested that he should content himself with giving directions, and that he should not run enough risks in his life. His answer was: "Well, I do not think I could ever refrain from going. If

the opportunity came." I regret to say it was not many days after that that he met his death in one of these raids. I was glad to read the observations made by the Under-Secretary of State in another place, and I could not resist the opportunity of paying my own testimony to one for whom I, in conjunction with all those who came in contact with him on the North-West Frontier of India, had such great admiration.

The General Situation.

On the general situation I desire to make but very few observations. I have been twinking as I sat and listened to the speech of my noble friend that it is not uninteresting to consider how the experiment that was made—experiment as it was called—in Parliament in 1919, and which began to take effect in 1921 when the reforms were first inaugurated in the India, have stood the test of time. It is far too late, and I have already occupied too much time, to discuss this question at any length, but I desire to state to your Lordships that when I went to India to 1921, not, I confess, having made myself thoroughly acquainted with the details of the Government of India Act, 1919, before those duties devolved upon me, I was not too sure that this new system of Government would be capable of working. I was charged with the special mandate of setting it on its feet, of piloting it, so far as I could and helping it on its way. That was part of my instructions. I have been through many anxious times in connection with the reforms.

I have had at times to use the emergency powers which were vested in me by Parliament as Viceroy and Governor-General. I took the view then, from all that I had read and from all that I knew, that these were powers that were given, not for the purpose of being looked at, but in order that they might be used if the emergencies occurred; and, when the emergencies occurred, I felt bound, in certain cases only, to use them. There were conflicts between the Legislative Assembly and myself, by virtue of the position that I occupied, but really they were infrequent conflicts and I do not pause to discuss them any further. Apart from those conflicts the Legislative Assembly and the Central Legislature have done a considerable amount of very useful work. Looking back upon it and remembering, as I am sure many of your Lordships do, statements that have been made in the past by Secretaries of State of the different Parties who have addressed you upon affairs in India, there is every reason, so far as we can judge from the evidence at present before us and that collected during these five years, for satisfaction with the momentous step which was taken to initiate a new era of relations between the Government and India.

British desire for Indian Goodwill.

It is too early to say more, and all that I desire to impress upon your Lordships is that, speaking from my own point of view, as from the observation that I have been able to give and as the result of my own experience in India, I have returned to this country with a greater faith in the value of those reforms and their practicability than I had when I left this country for India. I have learnt to set greater value upon them, and let me add that, in the difficulties that they have had to encounter, the cause has largely been suspicion and distrust of the ultimate intentions of the British Government and of the Government of India. I believe that the time is now fast approaching, if it has not already been reached, when India will recognise that we do intend to carry out the promises made in that Bill in the spirit and in the letter, that they will be generously interpreted, as they were in their inception generously conceived, and that all that is asked in this country—and surely it is worth India's while to ponder it and give effect to it—is that there should be a response from India which will show that India has at last appreciated the value and the benefit of the reforms that were instituted under this Act and that it is for her to take the action and to manifest the spirit that are necessary to enable her to go further forward and realise in the future the ultimate aim that she has in store and that is promised her and to continue along the path that is mapped out. I believe—I may perhaps be speaking a little rashly, but I am prepared to take the risk—that in the end, if India will only devote herself to show her goodwill, she will attain the position that she desires, she will become a full partner in the British Empire, she will attain her responsible Government and she will be able to work with the British Government and, I trust, with all the British Empire for the happiness and contentment of her people.

The Judicial Committee Bill

HOUSE OF COMMONS—THE 1ST DECEMBER 1926.

The following is an account of the Debate on the Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Commons on the 1st. December 1926. The debate in the Lords took place on the 8th June 1926 and is given in Vol. I. p. 115. In the Commons the Bill was however withdrawn, to be introduced again, there being no time for the Government to pilot it in the current session of the Parliament, in view of the controversial issues raised by the members of the Labour Party. It will be seen from the report of the debate as given below that the proposal was severely criticised on various grounds. The first ground of objection taken was that, while the Government had backed out of their promise to force mine-owners to pay a living wages to miners, they were now asking Parliament to pay £4,000 to two Judges, one half of it to come from India. The Labour members asked why the law of supply and demand, which was stated to govern the fixation of wages to workers, should not be applied to the Judges' salary when efficient lawyers could be had for an amount less than that mentioned in the Bill. The second point urged was that when the Imperial Conference had specifically stated that questions affecting judicial appeals should be determined only in accordance with the wishes of the Dominions, it was premature to discuss the present Bill, because in the first place, India might decide to revise the present procedure in regard to appeals and in the second place, the work of the Privy Council might be shortened if Canada or other Dominions should provide themselves with Courts of their own beyond which appeals would not be allowed. The Attorney-General, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Under-Secretary of State for India spoke in different voices and would not tell the House clearly whether pensions were intended to be given, what would be done in the eventuality of India refusing to contribute her portion and what necessity there was to pay £4,000 to Judges who, according to the Attorney-General, would accept £2,000 if the whole circumstances were explained to them.

The Debate.

The Attorney-General (Sir Douglas HOGG): I beg to move, "That the Bill be now read a Second Time."

The purpose of this Bill is to provide for the appointment of two Judges with English experience to sit on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and to assist in the hearing of Indian appeals. As the House knows, the ultimate Court of Appeal for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland is the House of Lords, and for all the other parts of the Empire the Privy Council. In the Privy Council, the business has increased enormously during recent years. In the case of Indian appeals in particular, whereas, for the five years ending, I think in 1910, there were about 52 appeals from India, for the last five years, the number was 91, so that they have very nearly doubled. In addition to that, there has been a very great increase in the number of appeals coming from our various colonies and His Majesty's Dominions overseas. The result is that it is practically necessary now for the Privy Council to sit in two divisions, one of which is occupied with the hearing of Indian appeals and the other with the

hearing of appeals from other places within its jurisdiction. In order to cope with the work we have the Lord Chancellor and six Law Lords, and we have the assistance of ex-Lord Chancellors, although at the moment there is only one available, Lord Haldane. Lord Buckmaster is suffering, unfortunately, from serious illness. Lord Finlay is largely occupied in assisting the International Tribunal at The Hague, and Lord Haldane is left to do the work which is available for ex-Lord Chancellors. There are, in addition, in the Privy Council two other paid members, appointed under the Act of 1833. Retired Indian Judges are allowed to sit on the Privy Council at a salary which is really only travelling expenses, £400 a year. One of these two, Syed Ameer Ali, has sat for nearly 20 years and his health will not permit him as a rule to attend.

We have been volunteered assistance from retired Lord Justices and other persons who are qualified, such as Lord Parmoor, Lord Phillimore, Lord Warwick and Lord Darling, but even with that voluntary assistance, the House will see that, when we have to provide for five persons to be sitting in the House of Lords, five more in the first division of the Privy Council, and six to make up another Court which is habitually necessary now for Indian appeals, that it is not possible to find the necessary number in order that the Courts may be maintained. The House, I am sure, will agree that the Privy Council is a most valuable link of the Empire, and that while we have that Court it is of the first importance to this country, as well as to the Dominions, that the personnel of the Court should be such as to command the respect of all those whose appeals may come before it. That being the state of affairs, the Secretary of State for India and the Lord Chancellor, with the assistance of the late Viceroy, Lord Reading discussed last year what was to be done to provide fresh assistance for the hearing of Indian appeals, and the plan they agreed upon was that there should be two persons appointed to sit in the Privy Council with Indian judicial or legal experience, and that those persons should each receive a salary of £4,000 a year, provided as to one-half by the English Exchequer, and as to the other half by the Indian Exchequer. Unfortunately, the Indian Legislature did not accept the proposal, although we have information that leads us to hope that that decision is not a final one. Meanwhile the position is that those appeals have to be heard, the Court has to be manned, and the plan which has recommended itself to the Government is to go forward with the payment of the salary which the English Exchequer was expected to provide, so that no extra cost will fall on this country, leaving it open to the Indian Legislature to agree, if they think fit, to pay their half later on. It is in order to achieve this that this Bill is being moved; and it provides for the appointment of these two extra Judges with Indian experience to the Privy Council at a salary of £2,000 a year each.

Miss Wilkinson: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the objection of the Indian Legislature to the appointment of these two Judges was on general political grounds or that they were unnecessary?

The Attorney-General: Their objection was on general political grounds. I do not think there was any suggestion that the two judges were unnecessary, provided that Indian appeals were heard in the Privy Council. In another place, when this matter was discussed, the strongest possible view in favour of the Bill was expressed by Noble Lords who hold different political views from the Government. Lord Haldane was a very strong supporter indeed of the Measure. I commend the Bill, therefore, to the House in the belief that we shall do something to remedy what is a real grievance. I am sure we all desire that appeals to be heard by the Privy Council shall be heard by a staff of judges adequate in numbers and experience to deal expeditiously and satisfactorily with the great issues they have to determine.

Mr. Tinker: What will happen if the Indian Legislature do not find their £2,000?

The Attorney-General: The persons appointed will have to accept the lower salary of £2,000. That I anticipate they will be willing to do in the circumstances.

Miss Wilkinson: If the two persons appointed are willing to serve for £2,000, was it not rather unnecessary to offer the larger salary in the first instance?

The Attorney-General: It will probably be possible to find people who may be willing to accept a salary of £2,000 a year with a prospect of getting £2,000 more, whereas if you make the maximum £2,000 you would not, I think, get people of the right age and experience to undertake a task of this kind. We are not making these appointments as a mere retiring pension for judges who have served their full time in India. If that was so, it would be quite possible to get people to serve at a much lower salary, but there is a provision in the Bill that the persons appointed shall retire at the age of 72, and it is our intention to appoint people who are in the prime of their judicial faculties to these appointments.

Sir Henry SLESSER : I have consulted my noble Friend, Lord Haldane, on this matter, and he is fully satisfied from his great experience of the work of the Privy Council that the Bill is absolutely necessary. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is, perhaps, the greatest tribunal in the Empire. Appeals come to it from every country, involving every kind of question from demarkation to the proprietorship of idols, and it is a tribunal which cannot be too efficiently well staffed. In the past, as the Attorney-General has said, the staffing of the Judicial Committee was largely dependent of the number of ex-Lord Chancellors who happened to be available for the purpose, and, incidentally, let me say what I have always wished to say, that when people accuse ex-Lord Chancellors of doing no work and receiving pensions, there are no persons connected with the Judiciary who do more unpaid work on the Privy Council than those persons who have been Lord Chancellors.

At the moment, with the exception of Lord Haldane, the whole of this valuable source of judicial power is lacking, and there is no doubt that appeals are being held up and justice, which is urgently required, is delayed because of a want of an adequate staff in the Privy Council. No one having regard to the general salaries which are paid to the Judiciary will say that these particular gentlemen are being over-paid. Compare it with the salaries received by Masters of the Supreme Court, and Country Court Judges. When you propose that members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council shall receive £2,000 a year as members of this Supreme Court of Appeal in the Empire, it cannot be said to be an excessive payment. I feel that a case has been made out for the Bill, and I hope the House will pass it and the necessary Money Resolution so as to enable the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to be properly staffed.

Mr. Hore-BELISHA : I desire to ask one question, and I hope my opportunity of receiving a reply from the Attorney-General has not passed. I desire to inquire, whether a decision of the Imperial Conference has been taken into account in relation to this Bill. On page 19 of the Summary of Proceedings, I find the following :—

“Another matter which we discussed, in which the general constitutional principle was raised, concerned the advantages governing appeals from judgments in the Dominions to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. From these discussions it became clear that it was no part of the policy of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain that questions affecting judicial appeals should be determined otherwise than in accordance with the wishes of the part of the Empire primarily affected. It was, however, generally recognised, that where changes of the existing system were proposed, which while primarily affecting one part raised issues in which other parts were also concerned, such changes ought to be carried out after consultation and discussion.”

The Attorney-General has informed us that certain political objections have been raised in India, and that there may be a wish to revise the present procedure in regard to appeals to the Privy Council. It may be that in the near future there will be some reduction in the work of the Judicial Committee. Canada may desire no longer to submit her cases to this great Tribunal, and, in that case, there would not be the same necessity to increase the personnel, with the assistance of the taxpayers' money. And there may be other parts of the Dominions who may not desire to avail themselves of the present opportunities of coming to London. If I am right, is not this Bill a little premature, and could not its passage be delayed in order that the wishes of the Dominions may become more clearly expressed in regard to their future intentions? I hope the Attorney-General will be able to inform me whether the discussions at the Imperial Conference have been taken into account before the presentation of this Bill.

The Labour Protest.

M. KIRKWOOD : I had no intention of taking part in this Debate, but I want to enter my emphatic protest, as a member of the working class and as a Socialist, that a member of our Front Bench should deliberately go out of his way to give his blessing to a proposal under which a man gets £4,000 a year. I think that is going a wee bit too far. We have just passed through one of the most awful and gigantic struggles on behalf of the working classes to maintain a living wage, or anything like the semblance of a living wage, and this same Government, this same Front Bench, this same team, that are asking us to agree to give one man £4,000 a year—

Sir H. Slessor : £2,000.

Mr. Kirkwood : You can say what you like. I say £4,000 a year; and “facts are chieft that winna ding and canna be disputed.” It is £4,000 a year. Am I right or wrong?

The Attorney-General : This House is being asked to vote £2,000.

Mr. Kirkwood: Yes, but I am astonished at even the Attorney-General, because he knows perfectly well—the Official Report will prove it to-morrow—that he said £3,000 from the British Exchequer and £2,000 from the Indian Exchequer. If that is not £4,000, I do not know what it is. There are the same men, the Prime Minister included, who are backing £4,000 for one man, as much wages as they are prepared to pay to 2,000 colliers; and we are expected to back a Bill like that, and our Front Bench will give its blessing to it after the titanic struggle that the miners have made. If ever there was class legislation, this is it. The Prime Minister says that there is no such thing as a class struggle in society. Here he is to-day backing one man for £4,000. Is not that a terrible difference? Is not that putting class against class—one man of the lawyer class, which costs this country every year over £100,000,000 to keep them going—£100,000,000, and they do not produce a single iota of the necessities of life, but simply live on the flesh and blood of those who do produce? Remember this, that all the good things, the good clothes that you wear, the good fruit that you eat and the good houses that you live in, are produced by labour, and whoever enjoys those good things without working for them is stealing the bread of the worker.

This is one of the reasons why this country cannot afford to give the miners and the workers in general a living wage. It is because there are certain individuals, under this system of ours, who take from it £4,000 a year. How long is it going to last? Are the Labour benches going to back a system that gives £4,000 a year to certain individuals who never have had to rough it, who never knew what it was to want their breakfast, who never knew what it was to be aching, as do the children in the slums, inasmuch as they do not know what it is to have a night's sleep because of the verminous conditions under which they live? Here is a body of men, Judges, who have been reared in the lap of luxury, and the very best that Britain can give them, and then when they come to 50 or 60 years of age they are to get this comfortable job. Why should they get it? What is it that these Judges have which is superior over me? [Hon. Members: "Brains!"] Hon. Members say "Brains." I am prepared to stand any test, and if I am not mentally and physically as well equipped as any man in this House, then I do not know what it means. If any of them can prove that they have rendered their country better service than I have done, I want to see them. This is just what is to be expected—rich men living in the lap of luxury—when it comes to one of their own class. I want the Prime Minister to think about this, because even yet I have not given him up. You get the Prime Minister of this country, after negotiating with my class, coming in direct contact with Cook and Herbert Smith and other members of my class, and seeing those men who, he knows, are just as capable—whether he differs from them in his point of view or not it does not matter—just as capable of stating their case, as competent in every way as any Judge, including Lord Haldane or all the Haldanes that ever were haldaned.

There is no Judge, there is no lawyer, there is no man in this country who has a right to £4,000 a year, while the miners and the engineers are paid the wages that they receive. Think of my own trade; think of the engineers. I know that my fellow-engineers are working for £2 15s. a week. It is a scandal, and there never was a Judge, there never was a Prime Minister, including the Present Prime Minister able to give a better account of himself or to give better service to the country than the skilled engineer, and yet the skilled engineer has to give his all for £2 15s. a week. Do you think that we are going calmly to sit here and listen even to our own Front Bench? It is enough to make the very stones cry out, to think that they would tell us that this £4,000 a year should be paid. It all turns on this, that you have on the one hand people with tens of thousands of pounds, taking tens of thousands of pounds; you have gentlemen on the other side of the House who are in the habit of drawing tens of thousands of pounds. [Hon. Members: "No."] They deny it. We had an example of that in Lord Vestey, who left this country in order to escape taxation.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker (Captain Fitz Roy): The hon. Member is now travelling rather wide of the subject before the House.

Mr. Kirkwood: I am keeping to the point, though I know quite well that I am not going on orthodox lines. But I am speaking the truth, and "truth cutteth keener than a two-edged sword." My folk outside to-day, the working classes of this country, are thinking about the idea of one man by Act of Parliament getting £4,000 a year. We have been told that it would not do for Parliament to interfere with the wages of the working classes, and that we must have freedom. Where is the freedom?

"O, Freedom, what things are done in thy name!"

Here is Parliament, here are the Tory party and the Prime Minister being part and parcel to a special Bill for the regulation of wages. [Hon. Members: "How about you"]

own Front Bench?" I can deal with my own Front Bench, and it can deal with me if it likes. Here you have the Government dealing with the wages of a certain class. They cannot deal with the wages of the working classes; they cannot be big enough. I thought the Prime Minister was big enough, when he said that he would cleave his way, if necessary, through private interests, in order to see that the working classes of this country got a fair deal. He failed, and failed miserably. He cannot bring in an Act of Parliament to ensure that the most valuable asset that the country has got, the working classes, get a comfortable living, but he is part and parcel to certain individuals getting £4,000 a year. I protest most emphatically, because, if the engineers are worth only £2 15s. a week, and the miners worth only the miserable pittance that this Government is responsible for forcing them to accept, then I say that there is no one in the British Empire who is worth £4,000 a year. The Government should think shame of themselves. If they were half human they would never bring forward a Measure like this.

Mr. N. MACLEAN: I want also to protest against a Money Resolution being brought in to supplement a Bill of this kind. The Government are constantly telling the people of this country, and particularly Labour Members and their supporters outside the House, that all remuneration amongst the working classes, for anything which they can do, must be based upon economic laws, that the economic laws which operate in this country determine and fix the wages of the workers. The engineers' wages, which are undoubtedly very low in consideration of the work that they perform, are supposed to be fixed by the law of supply and demand. During the whole of the miners' dispute the country was told by the Press, by the Prime Minister and by those who sit beside or behind him, that the miners must be prepared to accept what they could get because of economic laws. We were told that we could not fight against economic laws, and that the miners' wages must be determined by economic laws.

What did that mean? The Prime Minister himself and others, speaking on his behalf, admitted that he could not, and he would not, by Act of Parliament fix the wages which the miners were to receive, that there was to be no legal fixing of wages for the miners. Yet the Government brings in a Bill and a Money Resolution fixing the wages of two new Judges. It is not a question of increasing the wages of existing Judges, but the giving of powers to appoint two additional Judges, and they are to receive from this country £2,000 a year, with the right to have that £2,000 supplemented by £2,000 from the Indian Exchequer. I ask the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General why they do not apply their own logic and argument when they are trying to meet the claims of miners and other working people.

Mr. Grotrian: Can you get Judges for less?

Mr. Maclean: You lock out the miners when you want them for less; lock out the Judges and you will soon get them for very much less.

Mr. Grotrian: It is a question of supply and demand. You cannot get them.

Mr. Maclean: There are scores of lawyers in London with very few briefs and very little employment who would take a job of this kind for very much less than £2,000 a year and who would possibly do the work much better than the men you are about to appoint.

Mr. Grotrian: They have no knowledge of Indian Law.

Mr. Maclean: We do not require a knowledge of Indian law or any other law to realise that the lawyer's trade union is the strongest trade union in the country. We find the lawyers always on the job when there is some pecuniary advantage to be gained. We have only to look around these benches when a question of this kind is being discussed and we find on the other side practically all its supporters are lawyers. [Hon. Members: "No!"] Hon. Members have only to look around them. Let them go down to the smokers room and they will see more. If we divide, let them examine the Division list and see the number of lawyers who have come together in support of this proposal. That is my proof. Do hon. Members require any additional proof of my statement? They know it to be true, and all their interruptions, sneers and laughter go for nothing. Of course, they have a majority and that is why they can laugh, but a few more Hails will put them where we are now, and then we shall see who will laugh.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker (Mr. James Hope): That is a kind of prophecy, and does not seem relevant to the subject under discussion.

Mr. Maclean: It is true it is a prophecy, but this Bill deals with the future and I thought it might be in order to make a reference to the future of the Labour and Tory parties. I protest against the proposal which is contained in this Bill and in the Money Resolution which accompanies it. If this country cannot afford a living wages to those who produce wealth, it cannot afford high salaries to the individuals who are to be appointed under this Bill. I hope the matter will be pressed to a Division, because the

Division List, when published in the Official Report to-morrow, will be very interesting. I, for one, will go into the Lobby gladly against this proposal. I shall vote with a very light heart against a proposal to give £4,000 a year to two lawyers, when we can get scores of men to do the work at lower rates if we leave it to the operation of the economic law and carry out the Prime Minister's pet theory.

Miss WILKINSON : I think neither the Attorney-General nor the hon. and learned Member for South-West Hull (Mr. Grottrian) are to be congratulated on their logic in this matter. They have said, first of all, that it is absolutely necessary to fix a sum of not less than £4,000 a year and that otherwise, it will be impossible to get members of the legal profession of sufficient knowledge and ability to do this extremely important work. Yet in the same speech the Attorney-General declared that when the Indian Legislature puts its foot down and says it is not going to pay £4,000 a year, we can find two gentlemen who, without the faintest demur, will come along and take exactly the same jobs at exactly half the rate. I cannot congratulate the lawyers on their consistency in this matter. One can only congratulate them on the way in which they stand up for their own trade union when rates of remuneration are under consideration. Far be it from me, as a trade unionist, to object to that, if it were not for the fact that we always find the members of the lawyers' trade union leading the opposition when it is a question of the trade union rights of the working class. It is just because they are the most virulent opponents of the trade union rights of other people that they must be prepared to accept considerable questioning when their own extraordinarily high rates of remuneration are under consideration.

One congratulates them on having been able to induce in this country a sort of mystical appreciation of the legal profession. They are regarded as wonderful and even when—as I understood the Attorney-General to admit—one of them is 80 years of age, there is no question of expressing anything but admiration for the marvellous brain which they can bring to bear on the problems placed before them. At any rate, the members of the legal profession are not subject to the risks which the members of the miners' and other trade unions have to undergo and they might be prepared to take less for working in such a protected trade. Those of us who have to stand the snecers which come from the other side when we are begging and asking for some merely decent minimum rate—one shilling and one three-fourth pence an hour or something like that—are expected to vote without demur for a proposal to give £4,000 a year to these, no doubt, estimable gentlemen. I think the hon. and learned Member for South-West Hull used an expression about the law of supply and demand. I ask the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General if they are prepared to put this proposal to the test of supply and demand and to advertise these positions among the legal profession. Is it suggested that there are no Indian members of the Bar qualified for these appointments? I understand there is considerable unemployment among Indian members of the Bar. Is it suggested that none of them would be willing to take this job at a much lower figure than that now proposed? The hon. and learned Member for South-West Hull will hardly say that their knowledge of Indian law is insufficient, since they are specialists in the subject. At the present time, when we are told we cannot pay a subsistence wages for work which we cannot do without, I hope we shall not have to pay thousands to people whose work we could do without, were it not for the legal fiction and the mystery which surrounds it.

Mr. BUCHANAN : I think the proposal in this Measure cannot be justified. It is sometimes argued against us that our own Front Bench is just as bad as the Front Bench on the other side. I, at least, have a clear conscience in this matter, because when our own party brought in a proposal to increase a salary from £2,000 to £5,000, I proposed it, and was practically alone in doing so. Therefore, I am carrying out quite logically the line which I took on this question towards my own colleagues when they were in office, and I cannot be accused of differentiating between one side and the other. The only argument for this proposal is that set up by the hon. and learned Member for South-West Hull (Mr. Grottrian), that it is in accordance with the law of supply and demand. I remember as a pattern-maker during the War when, under the law of supply and demand, we could have demanded tremendous wages from the nation. So could the engineers at that time. We could have asked for, and I think we would have been given great concessions, but we were told—and, possibly, it was right—that we would be blackmailing the nation by taking advantage of a temporary shortage to insist on terms which the nation could not afford. It is admitted that since the War the men in the building trade have, in the common saying, "the ball at their feet," but it has been argued that the building trade were blackmailing the nation, and that no section of

workers has a right to insist on terms from the nation which are outside the nation's capacity.

Now we are told that the law of supply and demand which was rejected in the case of the engineers and the builders is to operate in the case of the Judges. Is there any difference in human nature between the engineer and the Judge? The Attorney-General has said that the Indian Government had to agree to guarantee 2,000 pound. They think it is an extortionate demand, but the British Government propose to take steps to compel the Indian Government to give terms which the Indian Government do not think they ought to pay. For such a proposal there cannot even be the justification which exists for a Cabinet Minister's salary. There is this to be said for the Cabinet Minister, that his job is precarious. Any election may end his term of office, but a Judge has a guarantee of full-time employment and full wages until he reaches the age of 72. There is also this important difference, that a Cabinet Minister has no provision made for his old age unless he is prepared to plead extreme poverty, but the Judge, whether poor or rich, has the guarantee of a handsome pension, and no deductions are made from his salary such as are necessary in regard to other classes of workers. The Minister of Health in answer to a question recently told us that the nation could not increase the amount of the old age pension. We are told that 10s. a week is sufficient for the old people of the nation and is all we can afford; but, by some miraculous process of reasoning, a Judge is said to be worthy of far more. A Judge has comparatively little responsibility. The responsibility of Judges is, in my opinion, largely overrated. So many people have little or no knowledge of a Judge's work, that advantage is taken of that lack of knowledge in order to "boost" the position. At a time when we are asking the miners and others to live on comparatively low wages, I submit that it would be criminal on the part of this House to agree to such an extravagant wages as this for these Judges.

Question put, "That the Bill be now read a Second time." The House divided: Ayes, 230; Noes, 28.

Report of Committee Discussion.

The following is from the Hansard report:—

Considered in Committee under Standing Order 71A. Mr. James Hope in the chair. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That for the purposes of any Act of the present Session to amend the Law with respect to the constitution of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, it is expedient to charge on the Consolidated Fund the yearly salary of two thousand pounds to be paid under the said Act to each of the two persons to be appointed thereunder to be members of the said Judicial Committee."—(King's Recommendation signified.)—(Mr. McNeill.)

Mr. MACLEAN: I do not think this matter ought to go through without some explanation from the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. Surely it is preposterous that we should be asked to vote £2,000 a year for two individuals, making £4,000 in all, without a word of explanation from him, and without some general statement as to the policy of the Government underlying its proposal. It is notorious that the Government come to this House with Financial Resolutions, and that when you, Mr. Chairman, or your colleague, puts the question from the Chair, the Financial Secretary or the Chancellor of the Exchequer gives a nod of the head, and on that it is expected that large sums of money are to be voted without explanation from those responsible. It is about time the House took charge of affairs, and demanded from those who are looked upon as being in control of the finance of the country that they should make some definite statement as to the reasons for the payments they ask the House to make. I think the House has a right to know just exactly what is in the mind of the Financial Secretary, and I hope we are going to have some statement, particularly when we have reminded the Government that there are other people in this country who, in our opinion, are more deserving of this money, who are more deserving of payments from the State, and who are being treated as though they were the worst possible aliens we could have in the country. When they ask for living conditions their claim is rejected, but here we have a proposal to pay £2,000 a year for year after year for two Judges. I am not going to protest against it at this stage, but I want to know what it means.

There is another point I would like some explanation upon. It states in the Bill that in the event of death vacancy occurring, further appointments can be made to make up the number of Judges to two. It is quite a reasonable thing to assume that in those circumstances—

The Chairman : The hon. Member can discuss the amount to be paid, but he appears now to be discussing provisions in the Bill. They can be discussed during the Committee stage of the Bill, but not on this Resolution.

Mr. Maclean : The Financial Resolution reads : "That, for the purposes of any Act of the present Session to amend the Law with respect to the constitution of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, it is expedient to charge on the Consolidated Fund the yearly salary of two thousand pounds to be paid under the said Act to each of the two persons to be appointed thereunder to be members of the said Judicial Committee."

Surely I would be in order in putting a question as to the implications which the appointment of these Judges, and their payment would bring upon this House?

The Chairman : I thought the hon. Member was discussing some provision in the Bill for further appointments on vacancies occurring.

Mr. Maclean : No, my point is this, if these Judges retired would they retire upon a pension, and would it be necessary for a further financial resolution to be brought in in order to provide the additional sum that would be necessary for their pensions? It is only right the House should know how for we may be pledged to payments to these individuals. It may be that certain individuals may be appointed who may have to retire through ill-health, and we may be paying pensions to ex-Judges and paying 3,000 pound a year to the Judges filling the places they have vacated.

The Government talk a great deal about the necessity for economy, how the country cannot afford this and cannot afford that, how old-age pensions cannot be increased, how housing subsidies have to be cut down, how health conditions are worsened, how payments to education authorities must be reduced—in fact, on every occasion when we make requests for expenditure on those social services to be maintained at the standard at which it used to be maintained, we are told the country cannot afford it. When, however, it is a question of finding money for Judges, finding money for individuals in this particular sheltered trade, they are not held up to ridicule and opprobrium such as ordinary working men or women getting weekly wages in other sheltered trades have to encounter. When the case of those who are skilled in word-spinning and legal jugglery comes before this House, we are asked to believe that this is some wonderful and great profession which will attract men to it only if they get the highest possible standard of living that our civilisation can offer. If this is the standard of living to which Judges are entitled, I submit the standard of living of every other individual in this country ought to be equal to that of the best Judge in the land; and if this country cannot afford to give to the workers of this country, who produce the wealth, a standard of living higher and better than is found for them by the present Government, the House has no right to vote away £2,000 a year for new judges, with the problematical addition of another £2,000. It is time the House took possession of the financial situation. If we have not the money to provide the people with the conditions which our present progress in civilisation merits, and which the productive activity of this country entitle them to have, this country is too poor to afford £2,000 a year for two new Judges.

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Ronald MCNEILL) : The only reason I rise is that if I did not do so I might appear to be discourteous to the hon. Gentleman after the pointed appeal he made to me personally; but really I do not think there is any occasion for me to discuss the matter, which has been fully dealt with already on the Second Reading of the Bill, a Debate which has just been brought to a close. Then my right hon. Friend the Attorney-General dealt fully with all the merits of the case. The hon. Member spoke as though on matters of this sort the Treasury had a separate and distinct standard. The hon. Member must remember that these are proposals of the Government, that this is the policy of the Government, and a Measure of this sort would not have been brought before the House if all the financial aspects of it had not been already considered by the Treasury. When a member of the Government like my right hon. and learned Friend brings forward a Bill and a Resolution of this sort is required, I think the House may take it for granted that there is no divergence of view between the Attorney-General and the Treasury on the point.

Mr. Maclean : May I ask for an answer as to the point I put regarding the possibility of pensions having to be paid? In that case would the Government have to bring in another Money Resolution?

Mr. McNeill : If any question of pension for these Judges arises, of course provision would have to be made for it by the House, and in that case, no doubt, another Money Resolution would have to be brought forward.

Miss WILKINSON : May I ask two further questions? The Attorney-General said the gentlemen who were going to have these posts would take them on the understanding

that an extra 2,000 pound would probably be given in future by the Indian Legislature. Can we have an undertaking from the Secretary to the Treasury, first, that no pressure, political or otherwise, will be brought to bear on the Indian legislature to provide this extra 2,000 pounds for people whom, apparently, they do not want; secondly, can we have an assurance that if the Indian Legislature persist in a refusal not to give this 2,000 pounds, he will not come to this House to make up the salary to 4,000 pounds—the amount which he had laid down as the salary?

Mr. SULLIVAN: I want to ask the members of the Conservative party if this is what they preach at the election. Here the Government are making proposals for these appointments, and they imagine that we have no right to ask for an explanation to be given to the House. It may be that your Judges are worth 2,000 pounds a year, and that you require two additional Judges, but what I want to know is that when you suggest that there is the possibility of a man of 72 years of age getting 4,000 pounds a year you are doing something which you would be afraid to tell the electors of the country. I protest against this method of adding to the burdens of a nation, and I hope we shall take advantage of this opportunity of driving the Government supporters into the Division Lobby in regard to this Vote.

Captain W. BENN: I feel that the preservation of the right of appeal is a very important part of our Imperial relations. I think in this matter we have a right to complain of a lack of candour on the part of the Attorney-General. First of all we are told that only 2,000 pound was to be voted, and then he told us that another 2,000 pound was to be paid by the Indian Legislature. Now it appears that there is to be a pension attached to it. I think we should be told that this is not simply a Vote for 2,000 pound, but that there is a possibility of a further 2,000 pound if the Indian Legislature does not vote that amount, and besides this, there is the possibility of a pension. Some hon. Members on these benches who would not support a Motion for a reduction of this Vote feel that we should have had a little more candour from the Attorney-General on this question. Inasmuch as we are now dealing with the question whether the additional 2,000 pound is likely to be voted by the Indian Government, and whether we shall be asked to vote it in this House if the Indian Government refuses. I think some representative of the India Office should be here to answer that question. I do not know whether the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies represents the India Office on this matter.

The Under Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs (Mr. Ormsby Gore): No.

Captain Benn: Then why is the Under-Secretary of State for India not present when this Money Resolution is being discussed? How can the Attorney-General give us full information as to whether the Indian Legislature objects to paying this money or not. It is important that we should know these facts, and only one person can tell us and that is the representative of the India Office. I think we might have had a little more candour about the full financial position, and we want more information about the intention of the Indian Legislature.

The Attorney-General: The hon. and gallant Gentleman has charged me with a lack of candour, but I wonder whether he took the trouble to be present when I moved the Second Reading of the Bill and listened to what I said on that occasion.

Captain Benn: As the Attorney-General is in the habit of making that kind of attack, I wish to say that I was present and I had the inestimable privilege of hearing what he then said.

The Attorney-General: In that case the hon. and gallant Member's charge is absolutely inexcusable, and, if he refers to the Official Report of our proceedings on that occasion, he will see that we asked the House to vote a Salary of 2,000 pound that the Indian Legislature had been asked to give an additional 2,000 pound, that last year the Indian Government did not agree, but that there is some hope that they may change their mind and do so later on. In view of the fact that the hon. and gallant Gentleman says he heard what I said, and has now been misrepresenting me, I say that his action is absolutely inexcusable. The only other accusation is that I did not tell the Committee that these Judges were to have pensions. The reason I did not tell the Committee that is that they are not to have a pension.

Mr. Thurtle: I beg to move, "That the Debate be now adjourned." I do so owing to lack of information in regard to this vote, and the absence of any representative of the India Office.

The Chairman: That is not quite the proper procedure. The hon. Member should move to report progress.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(Mr. Thurtle.):

GOVT. OF INDIA REPORT ON THE

International Labour Conference.

[The Eighth and Ninth Sessions of the International Labour Conference were held at Geneva in May and June 1926. The following is a short report of Sir Atul Chatterjee, the Govt. of India Delegate to the Conference, and was published in India in September 1926 in response to a suggestion made in the Legislative Assembly. The speeches delivered by the Indian Delegates on the occasion have been given in the 1st Volume of the Register p. 145.]

The Eighth Session opened on Wednesday, the 26th May, 1926 and closed on Saturday, the 5th June. The Ninth (Maritime) Session opened on Monday, the 7th June and closed on Thursday, the 24th June. At the Eighth Session there were 14 and at the Ninth 17 plenary sittings. At each Session there were also numerous meetings of the Committees set up to deal with the various items of business.

EIGHTH SESSION.

Government Delegates.—Sir Atul Chatterjee, K.C.I.E., High Commissioner for India ; Sir Louis Kershaw, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Assistant Under Secretary of State, India Office.

Adviser.—Mr. R. N. Gilchrist, Labour Intelligence Officer, Bengal.

Employers' Delegate.—The Hon'ble Sir Arthur Froom, of Messrs. MacKinnon, Mackenzie & Co.

Workers' Delegate.—Mr. Lajpat Rai, M.L.A.

NINTH SESSION.

Government Delegates.—Sir Atul Chatterjee, K.C.I.E., Sir Louis Kershaw, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

Advisers.—Mr. R. N. Gilchrist. Mr. J. E. P. Curry, Shipping Master, Bombay.

Employers' Delegate.—The Hon'ble Sir Arthur Froom.

Adviser.—Captain H. J. Rouse, Marine Superintendent, B. I. S. N. Co., Ltd., Calcutta.

Workers' Delegate.—Mr. M. Daud, M.A., B.L., M.L.C., General Secretary, Indian Seamen's Union, Calcutta.

Adviser.—Mr. S. Moghal Jan, Chief Steward.

Much interest was evinced at both Sessions of the Conference in the protests against the nomination of Sir Arthur Froom as the Indian Employers' delegate. This was the first occasion in the history of the International Labour Conference when the nomination of an Employers' delegate had been challenged. Moreover, printed documents in English and French setting forth in full the case of the protesting associations was extensively circulated among all Members and visitors to the meetings.

At the Eighth Session protests were lodged by four bodies, the Karachi Buyers' & Shippers' Chamber, the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta,

the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association, and the Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce. The same protests, together with one from the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, were made to the Ninth Session of the Conference. The protesting bodies were represented at Geneva by Mr. S. N. Haji, who supported their case in person before the Credentials Committee of each Session.

The CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE of the Eighth Session found that Mr. Narottam Morarjee had been offered by the Government of India the position of Employers' delegate to the Eighth Session and had for certain reasons declined the invitation. The Committee felt that it could only take into consideration this refusal and it could not enter into the reasons for it. Nor could it take into account the argument put forward by the protesting organisations that after Mr. Morarjee's refusal the Indian Government should have offered the position to another Indian, in view of the fact that no other candidate was proposed by the Chamber of Commerce which nominated Mr. Morarjee. The Credentials Committee noted that the principal question at issue (*viz.*, whether Sir Arthur Froom had been recommended by the 'most representative organisation') was connected with the Ninth Session of the Conference and the recommendation that the Eighth Session should validate the nomination of Sir Arthur Froom could not prejudice the consideration of this principal question by the Ninth Session.

When the subject came up before the plenary meeting of the Eighth Session, Mr. Lajpat Rai (the Indian Workers' delegate) said that he only wished to state that he did not accept the position taken by the Government delegate about the most representative character of the Organisations represented by Sir Arthur Froom. Sir Louis Kershaw also declined on that occasion to enter into the merits of the question but expressed his readiness to make it clear at the Ninth Session that Sir Arthur Froom had been nominated by the most representative organisations of employers in India. The proposal of the Credentials Committee to approve the Credentials of the Employers' delegate of India was then adopted without any opposition at the Eighth Session.

The protests came up in due course before the Credentials Committee of the Ninth Session of the Conference. The report of this Committee is self-explanatory and is reproduced in full below :

"Five Indian employers' organisations (1) the Buyers' and Shippers' Chamber of Karachi, (2) the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association, (3) the Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce, Rangoon, (4) the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, and (5) the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Bombay, have addressed to the General Conference, which has transmitted them to the Credentials Committee, five objections to the Credentials of Sir Arthur Froom, appointed by the Government of India as Employers' Delegate for that country.

The Committee has carefully examined the documents submitted to it. It has also heard the evidence of Sir Louis Kershaw, Indian Government Delegate, Sir Arthur Froom, Indian Employers' Delegate, and Mr. S. N. Haji, the duly accredited representative to the Conference of the protesting organisations.

From the documents placed before it and the oral explanations, the Committee notes the following facts :—

The objections allege (1) that Sir Arthur Froom represents neither Indian interests nor Indian employers: (2) that the organisations which nominated Sir Arthur Froom are not the most representative organisations of the employers of India.

With regard to the first point, the Committee, whilst considering that the representation of a country at the General Conference should be a national one, has not been able to discuss the substance of the question nor to form an opinion upon a problem the solution of which undoubtedly rests with the Government of each of the Members.

With regard to the second point, the Committee finds as follows: the Government of India, by a press *communiqué* dated 8 October 1925, invited the employers' organisations of India to nominate, before the 15th January 1926, a delegate for each of the two Sessions of the General Conference of the Representatives of the Members.

Within the time limit thus fixed, two Chambers of Commerce, those of Bengal and Bombay (European Chambers), nominated Sir Arthur Froom, and two Indian Chambers of Commerce, that of Bombay and the Buyers' and Shippers' Chamber of Karachi, nominated Mr. Narottam Morarjee. After the expiration of the time limit, the three other Chambers of Commerce which have now lodged objection also supported the candidature of Mr. Narottam Morarjee. The appointment of Sir Arthur Froom as Employers' Delegate was made by the Government of India during the month of March. The employers' organisations which have lodged objections, and their representative Mr. Haji, have assured the Conference and the Credentials Committee that the Chambers of Commerce of Bengal and Bombay, which have nominated Sir Arthur Froom, were not the most representative of the Employers of India.

On the contrary, the Delegate of the Government of India, Sir Louis Kershaw, has made a formal declaration to the Committee that these Chambers of Commerce for the purpose of this Conference were really the most representative of the employers of India.

On the basis of the numerous documents submitted to the Committee, as well as on the ground of the oral explanations made to it, the Committee has nevertheless not been able to arrive at the conclusion, as requested by Mr. S. N. Haji on behalf of the objecting organisations, that the Chambers of Commerce which nominated Sir Arthur Froom were not the most representative of the employers of India.

In these conditions, the Committee deems it expedient that the General Conference should proceed to validate the credentials of Sir Arthur Froom."

On this Report of the Credentials Committee being taken into consideration at the plenary sitting of the Session, Mr. Daud (the Indian Workers' delegate), while admitting that Sir Arthur Froom had been selected by the most representative Chambers of Bengal and Bombay consisting of European Employers, differed from the view that these Chambers were the most representative Employers' organisations in India. He added that Indian employers who were not members of these organisations possessed a larger number of factories and used a larger amount of capital than European employers in India. Mr. Daud suggested that European and Indian employers' organisations in India should come to a common understanding in regard to the appointment of representatives to the International

Labour Conference or else the Government should nominate such representatives by rotation. On the assumption that Mr. Daud was not opposing the proposal of the Credentials Committee, Sir Louis Kershaw refrained from discussing the merits of the case. He drew attention to the desire of the India Government that Indian employers should participate in the Conference as evidenced by efforts made by them to give Mr. Morarjee an opportunity to come to Geneva. In regard to Mr. Daud's suggestion regarding future nominations, Sir Louis Kershaw endorsed the proposal that European and Indian employers should come to a common understanding but he pointed out the difficulty in a system of rotation in view of the obligation of the Indian Government to comply with the exact terms of the Treaty. The plenary sitting then adopted the Report of the Credentials Committee without any opposition.*

The Eighth Session.

Agenda.—The items on the Agenda for the Eighth Session of the Conference were:—

- (1) Discussion of the Director's Report.
- (2) Simplification of the Inspection of Emigrants on Board Ship.
- (3) Consideration of a proposal made by the British Government to deal with the Reports rendered by States Members of the Organisation under Article 408 of the Treaty of Versailles.
- (4) Amendments to the Standing Orders of the Conference.
- (5) Resolutions (submitted by individual delegates under Article 12 of the Standing Orders of the Conference).

Elections and Committees.—Mgr. W. H. Nolens, Government Delegate of Holland, was elected President of the Session. The Vice-Presidents were Dr. Aristides De Agüero Y Bethancourt (Cuba) for the Government Group, Dr. Francois Hodac (Czechoslovakia) for the Employers' Group, and Mr. Hermann Muller (Germany) for the Workers' Group. Sir Atul Chatterjee was unanimously elected Chairman of the Selection Committee which directs and organises the work of the Session.

In addition to the Selection Committee and the Credentials Committee, four Committees were constituted to deal respectively with (1) the procedure relating to the examination of reports under Articles 408, (2) the Double Discussion Procedure, (3) the Amendment of Standing Orders, and

*In this connection it would be interesting here to read a special cable to *The Bombay Chronicle* from Paris which said that Prof. Haji, the representative of the Indian Chambers, en route to London at the end of the Geneva Labour Conference, when interviewed, expressed satisfaction at the result of the Geneva mission, regarding protests against the nomination of the employers' delegate. He said: "There continued for one hour and a half an interesting discussion before the Credentials Committee, between Sir L. Kershaw and Sir Arthur Froom on the one hand and himself on the other. Its effects on the Committee, were favourable to Indian sentiments judged by various admissions, made by the Committee in the report, which deemed it expedient to validate the credentials of Sir Arthur Froom. In the discussion before the Committee, the Indian Government delegate seems to have gone to the length of saying that Indian protests were not genuine and that they were political, being connected with agitation for the reservation of coastal traffic." Prof. Haji challenged Sir L. Kershaw to point out a single statement in all the protests which was political in nature. He assured the Committee that the protests were based fully on the right of the Indian Associations to representation at International Conferences. Upon this position being accepted by the Committee, Sir L. Kershaw, after preliminary explanations which were not accepted, finally withdrew his statement. Ed.

(4) Inspection of Emigrants. The Indian Government secured representation on the first and second of these Committees as well as on the Selection Committee. Sir Arthur Froom obtained a place on the Fourth Committee. Mr. Lajpat Rai was elected by the Workers' Group to be a member of the Third Committee and a substitute member of the Selection Committee.

Discussion on the Director's Report.—The Report for 1926 was 757 pages in length and the debate occupied five full sittings of the Session. The discussion was of the same general nature as in previous years, but at the Eighth Session no mention was made of maritime labour, as it was understood that a portion of the time of the Ninth Session would be devoted to the purely maritime sections of the Report. Much of the discussion, as usual, related to the slow progress in the ratification of the Washington Hours Convention, but the speeches indicated considerable hope that tangible results would follow the Conference on this subject held in London in March last between the Labour Ministers of Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and Italy, the countries of chief industrial importance in Europe. This feeling was strengthened by the declaration of the Belgian Government representative that his Government had definitely recommended ratification to the Belgian Legislature and the later announcement that the Belgian Chamber of Deputies had adopted the Bill. In France, too, the legislation necessary for ratification is at present before the Senate, the Chamber of Deputies having already passed it. The German Government representative stated that a Bill had been drafted and was at present under consideration by the Federal States. No definite announcement was made by the British Government representative beyond the statement that the results of the London Conference were under the consideration of His Majesty's Government.

Interesting references were made by several delegates to the new industrial experiments in progress in America, and to which the Director devoted some space in his Report. The introduction of new scientific ideas in the organisation of industry was welcomed by the Workers' delegates, while regret was expressed that the United States, the home of these ideas, was not a Member of the International Labour Organisation.

A feature of special interest to India in the debate on the Director's Report at the 1925 Session of the Conference had been the discussion regarding the failure of Japan to ratify the Washington Conventions relating to hours of work and night work of women. This question was again raised at the Eighth Session. Sir Arthur Froom, who led the debate on this subject, put the case of the Bombay Millowners in a cogent and forcible manner. He gave a resume of recent Indian factory legislation and described the serious situation that had arisen in the Indian cotton mill industry owing to the hours of work and the night work of women in Japanese mills. He brought to notice, as evidence of the earnest desire of India to ameliorate the condition of workers, not only the ratification of the Washington Conventions, but also the passing of new measures such as the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Trade Unions Act. He deplored the fact that there had been no improvement in the position in Japan during the twelve months that had elapsed since the last meeting of the Conference. The Japanese Factory Act of 1923, though passed by the Diet, had not been promulgated, nor would it adequately fulfil Japan's obligations under the Washington Convention. After promulgation, a further three years' grace

was to be given before the provisions of the Act, meagre as they were, were put into operation.

Sir Arthur Froom's plea was ably supported by Mr. Lajpat Rai, who made a strong appeal to Japan on grounds of humanity and in the interests of the mothers of the race. He mentioned not only the prohibition of night work of women in Indian factories, but also the efforts which were being made to prohibit the underground work in mines by women and children, the existence of which in Japan was brought prominently to the notice of the Conference by Mr. Narasaki, the Workers' delegate of Japan. (It may be noted that at a later stage Sir Atul Chatterjee pointed out that underground work by children was at present absolutely prohibited in India.) Mr. Lajpat Rai expressed a strong hope that Japan would 'vindicate the honour of the East and the Orient'. The reasoned and temperate speech of Mr. Lajpat Rai was reinforced by an equally powerful appeal from Miss Margaret Bondfield, who accompanied the British Delegation as Adviser to the Workers' delegate. As a representative of trade union sections interested in women's work, Miss Bondfield acknowledged thankfully the improvements that had already taken place in India and Japan. She saw however no justification for the procrastination of Japan in prohibiting the night work of women. She drew attention to the condition of women workers in China and added "What can we say to them if in that near country of Japan these necessary reforms are being continually postponed? It is because that we feel that we must look to Japan for the greatest influence in bringing about an amelioration of the condition of affairs in China. The Indian Delegate put it from the standpoint of the way in which Japan was retarding the growth of development in India. I agree, but it is still more terrible to think of that country which has worse conditions than Japan and which is being encouraged to do nothing by the fact that Japan, that highly organised, highly efficient country, is delaying the operation of these Conventions." She hoped that it would soon be possible to say that "Japan is determined to come into line to help to save the lives of large masses of women, who in the past have been the most exploited sections of the labour movement".

Sir Atul Chatterjee, who spoke after Miss Bondfield, expressed gratification on behalf of the Indian Government and the Indian people for the very appreciative and encouraging references that had been made in the Director's Report and in the speeches in the Conference to the very satisfactory progress of social legislation in India. He pointed out that India was the only country of chief industrial importance which had ratified the Hours Convention. The five chief countries of Europe were engaged in serious consideration of this matter, but India was particularly interested in ratification by Japan 'which is the country nearest us and with which we have the closest commercial relations.' The position of India was becoming more difficult every year, and although under the Treaty Japan was perfectly free to ratify or not to ratify, Sir Atul Chatterjee hoped that in the same way as the countries of chief industrial importance in Europe were giving close attention to the subject, Japan also would do the same. Turning to the subject of night employment of women, he showed how the Washington Convention was merely a confirmation of a similar Convention that had been passed in Berne in 1906 and how every civilised country had in practice prohibited the night work of women. The 1923 Japanese Act did not carry out the requirements laid down at Washington. The object of the Washington

Convention was to secure a complete stoppage of all work for women for at least eleven hours during the night, whereas the Japanese Act abolished work only between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., with permission to the administrative authorities to extend the night period to 11 p.m. As in his speech on this subject last year, Sir Atul made a strong appeal on ethical grounds to the Japanese Government.

Mr. Mayeda, the Japanese Government delegate, spoke on very much the same lines as in the previous year. He repeated that in actual fact, hours in Japanese cotton mills were practically the same as those prescribed by the Washington Convention. Mr. Mayeda explained that delay in the promulgation of the 1923 Act had been the result of the disastrous earthquake in Japan in 1923. He was however able to announce that the Act was to be promulgated on the 1st July 1926, a statement that was received with much satisfaction by the Conference.

What may be termed the Oriental part of the debate was wound up by speeches from Mr. Matsukata, the Japanese Employers' delegate, Mr. Narasaki, the Japanese Workers' delegate and Mr. Chao Hsin Chu, the Government delegate of China. Mr. Matsukata defended the Japanese cotton mills which he said have better conditions than the Indian mills. He himself, however, as an employer had introduced the eight-hour day in his own works, which employed 15,000 men. Mr. Narasaki in chronicling the grievances of Japanese workers laid special stress on the fact that Japan had not taken adequate measures to protect women and children in industry.

In an interesting speech regarding labour conditions in China, Mr. Chao Hsin Chu pointed out that China was still predominantly an agricultural country. Industrialism had come to China but would have to adapt itself to Chinese conditions. Factory industries were at present confined to the Treaty Ports which did not conform to Chinese law. The decree issued in 1923 by the Chinese Government reforming factory labour conditions and appointing factory inspectors had no force in the extra-territorial areas. The Chinese labourer was different from labourers in the West, in that he was satisfied to earn just enough to keep body and soul together and objected to being made a part of modern industrial machinery, as was shown by the recent strike in Shanghai in which the workmen considered better treatment to be more important than enhanced wages and shorter hours.

In addition to his appeal to Japan, Mr. Lajpat Rai had in his speech referred to a few other problems. He drew attention particularly to the position of native and coloured labour in countries with foreign Governments or with Governments under Mandates, a subject to which he returned later when he moved a Resolution asking the Office to study the conditions of such workers. He was careful not to introduce into the discussion on the Director's Report any controversial matter regarding the position in the British Dominions, particularly in South Africa. Mr. Lajpat Rai also raised the question of forced labour both in British India and in Indian States. On this point Sir Atul Chatterjee replied that forced labour was permitted by law in British India only in certain exigencies such as the prevention of damage to canals and irrigation works. He added that the Government representatives at the International Labour Conference were not authorised to speak for the Indian States. The question of forced labour had been raised more than once in the Assembly of the League of

"My first impressions were somewhat unfavourable. The depressing character of the Salle de la Reformation, in which the Assembly sits, the confusion attending the first day of the Session, the time wasted in apparently fruitless oratory—all these made me wonder for a moment whether I had really served my country and my Order by leaving India to attend such a gathering. But before long I observed two things. In the first place, this was no ordinary meeting of Parliamentary representatives. I had only to look round about me to discover the majority of front-rank statesmen of Europe. Almost every one of the fifty nation here represented had sent its Premier or its Foreign Minister, and in some cases both. It was further plain that a large number of these eminent statesmen were personal friends. Nor I was greatly struck by the cordiality of the atmosphere. As it seems to me it is no small thing to gather together in a single hall the men who by their official position, and the power which it has placed in their hands, are authorized to speak for almost half the world. The mere fact that they meet, talk, and dine together cannot but encourage harmony, smooth over difficult questions, and conduce to friendly arrangements. Indeed, one of the most practical achievements of the League is its encouragement of the habit of compromise, of give and take, of the settlement of differences by friendly discussion.

Second Observation.

"My second observation was equally interesting. It became plain to me that the League performs for public opinion the task which a lens performs for light: it receives it transmits, it and concentrates it upon the point where it produces the maximum effect. To public opinion the Assembly in particular is very sensitive; and in the atmosphere of enthusiasm which characterizes the sessions, resistance to a certain kind of demand is almost impossible. Hence arises to my mind a particular blend of strength and weakness which runs through all the doings of the League. On the one hand, Great Powers, despite all the diplomacy that can be devised, frequently find themselves confronted with a situation in which they have either to accept the prevalent sentiment, or to incur an undesirable odium by remaining isolated in resistance to it. This is on the whole healthy especially as smaller States, which make up what may be called the rank and file of the League, respect the position of the Great Powers, and do not as a rule employ their numerical majority injudiciously. Here let me note emphatically that my experience is far from confirming the complaint made by certain superficial observers that the "equality" of the League is mere camouflage. It is very far from true to say that the Great Powers "rig" everything from behind the scenes; that the smaller States are mere puppets dancing at the bidding of a hidden hand. On the contrary, there is a perpetual give and take. The smaller States take care not to press the Great Powers too hard; but the Great Powers cannot resist, as experience has shown, a strongly backed demand for action of a particular kind. Their influence as a rule is cast in the direction of moderation. They endeavour to cure injudicious enthusiasm, to inculcate cautions, and to prevent the adoption of sweeping resolutions which there is little prospect of carrying into effect. When for some reason or another they abandon this function for the moment curious things happen. Witness the events of the Fifth Session, when the Premiers of Britain and France, far from

guiding the enthusiasm of the Assembly into channels which admitted of early practical expression, put themselves in the advance-guard of the idealists, acted as though there was no distinction between saying something and doing it, and altogether ignored difficulties of the most obvious kind in a manner worthy only of a revolutionary convention.

Assembly's Force.

"There can be no two opinions as to the force, call it moral or call it psychic, wielded by the Assembly. This body reacts clearly and emphatically to the proposals placed before it, and gathers behind it sentiments and impetus which makes them most difficult to resist. For which reason there is always the risk that it may be stampeded into unreflecting idealism and thus commit itself to views or programmes of a character likely to affect deleteriously its own influence and reputation. It is therefore important and there should be submitted to the Assembly only those proposals which have been carefully considered from the point of view of practicability, and properly prepared from the point of view of constitutional procedure.

"Hence comes the unique importance of the work of the committees. It would be a mistake to assume, as is sometimes done, that the Assembly is a mere rubber-stamp which automatically places its imprimature upon the decisions of the committees. The Assembly has a formidable will of its own; it will reject or alter, from time to time, what is placed before it. But the committees act as a strainer for much of what might otherwise clog the machinery. It is in the committees that the wild-eyed enthusiasts find themselves compelled to reckon with hard facts; in the committees that amicable compromises are arranged and working harmony cemented; in the committees that the burden of the work is carried through. Personally, I was so much convinced of the truth of this, that I deliberately concentrated upon the committees side of the work, and left the Assembly rather alone. I may be pardoned for remarking that this line of action was justified by its results. Two questions in particular, among the cases definitely assigned to me, threatened to involve, either directly or indirectly, implications of a very undesirable nature. It would have been open to me to reserve my views, and those of the Government of India, for the open Assembly. I preferred to bring my guns to bear in committee, with the consequence that I was able to secure all the desired results without incurring the odium of strongly opposing, in public debate, the views of a certain great and friendly Power.

Social Aspect.

"A word about the social side of the League. Everyone works so hard during the four weeks of the session that large and elaborate entertainments are somewhat at a discount. Many Delegations confine their hospitality to a single soiree for one admirable concert, to which everyone is invited. I myself preferred to arrange a continual series of small, informal lunches and dinners, at which I had the privilege of entertaining privately and separately the Delegation of each important nation. Among the results I count many new friends, much first-hand information about the drama of contemporary politics from persons who play the leading part therein; and—as I sincerely hope and trust—the awakening of a new appreciation, in several quarters at least, of the character and ideals of my own Orders and of my fellow-countrymen".

Indian Propaganda in Britain

India and the Labour Party.

People in India were considerably pained and surprised at the attitude of Labour spokesmen in Parliament towards Lord Birkenhead's speech of the 7th July. An impression gathered considerable strength among the adherents of the Indian National cause that there was want of sympathy between the English Labour movement and the aspirations of the Indian people. Colonel Wedgwood's speech in the House of Commons during the debate on India Office Estimate accentuated the dissatisfaction. The gallant Colonel, forgetting for the time that it was the Labour Party's policy to grant immediate Self-government to India, sought to force the Swarajists to work the dual system of Government which the different sections of political parties in India had condemned outright. We quote below a very informing article of *Hindu* showing the Labour mentality and commend a careful perusal of it to our readers :—

"Salvation for India should certainly come from within : the idea of our securing Swaraj mainly through the help of outside agencies, without ourselves making great efforts and big sacrifices for it, is galling to our self-respect. Nobody believes in the possibility of India retaining her freedom for any length of time if she has got it by mere gift, not by her own exertions proving her worth and capacity. Nevertheless, it would be foolish puritanism and harmful impudence, if in our fight, we do not take care to enlist on our side the support of persons or associations whose general outlook on life and predisposition are in favour of rescuing struggling nationalities from the fetters which bind them. That is why we attach importance to the work of propaganda abroad ; in Great Britain in particular there is good work to be done in this direction, and so far as intellectual adherence to the ideal of equality of opportunity and human brotherhood is concerned, there can be no doubt that the Labour Party is the one organisation in that country which can be approached with some prospect of our obtaining sympathy and, if possible, active assistance. Moreover, that Party has made promises and given pledges which India is entitled to ask should be redeemed as early as possible. We should do nothing which would disturb India's relations with that Party, but frankness and candour should inspire our discussions with it on our problems. That is why we consider that the controversy between Indian and Labour leaders should be conducted in a way which would help mutual understanding and lead to better appreciation of each other's difficulties and view-points.

"From a perusal of the debates in Parliament and of the correspondence in the press it appears that the major differences between the Labour Party and Indian leaders are quite capable of being easily explained. That we in India have been surprised and pained by the attitude of Labour spokesmen in Parliament towards Lord Birkenhead's speech is only too true ; it is undeniable that, when Lord Birkenhead was in office, this has accentuated the dissatisfaction. But, if we think over it, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Col. Wedgwood cannot but realise and appreciate India's disgust at the inordinate delay in Great Britain fulfilling its pledges to India, and at Labour, which has always stood for immediate self-Government, hesitating to give effect to its views. Hell is paved with good intentions and it is rather unreasonable to expect India to remain quiet in the belief that one day Swaraj would come to her like manna from above. Further, it is unreasonable, regard being had to the shameless way in which solemn assurances have been thrown to the winds that Indian politicians should be dictated to in regard to the methods of political agitation. It is extraordinary that such a sincere friend of India as Col. Wedgwood should seek to force Swarajists to work a system of dual government which his own Party, Indian Liberals and Indian Ministers have all combined to condemn outright.

One sees in this unreasonable demand more the disappointment of the enraged donor whose doubtful gift is refused than the calm disposition of a balanced mind which is able to relate results to causes and look at things in their proper proportion. One of the unjust and unwarranted charges is that Indian leaders do not care for Indian labourers and that they are against any extension of the franchise. India has done more to carry out decisions of the International Labour Conference than many other countries, including those in Europe; that does not show that she is indifferent to the worker. It is a pity that this false accusation, which the enemies of India prefer out of malice, should be believed in by Labour. There is great room for improvement, but we are progressing as rapidly as our emaciated political condition would allow, for it is absolutely true that a formidable obstacle to Indian labour coming to its own is the opposition of the bureaucracy itself. Does Col. Wedgwood know that it is the majority of the Muddiman Committee, consisting of four Europeans and one Indian, who want to deny franchise to the large sections of the population who are now unrepresented, and not the minority consisting entirely of Indians?"

The Essex Hall Meeting

Under the auspices of the Indian Association, a meeting was held on the 22nd July 1925 at Essex Hall, London, to consider the situation arising out of the statement of Government policy announced by Lord Birkenhead in his speech in the Lords on the 7th July. The proceedings were interesting enough, especially when Colonel Wedgwood was engaged in a wordy controversy with Mr. T. C. Goswami, M.L.A., on the platform and some more vociferous critics in the body of the hall.

Mr. GOSWAMI was the principal speaker. His manner was mild but his speech was by no means meek. He had some nice words to say about the kindness of his reception in that country. He wanted to make it quite clear that, in spite of bitter words which might be flung about, India cherished no ill-will towards England. The object of the Swarajya Party was to see that the destinies of the world were governed by the common people of all countries. He repudiated the idea which had obtained some credence in England that the Swarajists were afraid of democracy and that they favoured the establishment of an Indian oligarchy. On the contrary, they wanted an extension of the franchise to the utmost possible limit, and even if present conditions did not allow of immediate adult suffrage, they were anxious to provide in the constitution for further extensions until full adult franchise had been reached.

Mr. Goswami confessed that he was not disappointed by Lord Birkenhead's speech in the Lords, because he expected nothing else. He was rather grateful that the noble lord had destroyed the excuse which Moderates had hitherto put forward as a reason for not joining the Swarajya Party. He was not prepared to state dogmatically what the policy of that party would be in the present circumstances, but it was the settled determination of the Indian people to achieve Swaraj, if possible within the British Empire, but if necessary outside.

Mr. Goswami went on to refer to the vigorous duel which has been carried on in the Labour Press between Colonel Wedgwood and Mr. Satyamurti, avowing of course his agreement with the latter. Mr. Goswami confessed that he only accepted the policy of non-violence on grounds of expediency. They had never yet said that they could coerce the British people into giving them Swaraj, but he made it clear that if it was possible to gain their end by physical force he was quite willing to fight for it and to die for it if need be. For the present, however, the speaker said, violence would be futile; therefore, expediency and ethics were against it.

Mr. Goswami warmed to his subject as he proceeded. He apologised for belonging to what he called "a sham Legislature" and confessed that it gave him anything but pleasure to find the letters M. L. A. after his name. The Swarajya Party would nevertheless contest the elections in 1926, and he was confident that they would capture a majority of the seats in all the Councils. When they had done that, they would have no compunction whatever in shutting up all the legislatures in the country. He admitted that some little good had come out of these bodies, but they had to choose between this little good and the greater good which might be obtained through deliberate and sustained obstruction. They were all for a peaceful adjustment of interests, but if peaceful negotiations failed, they would do their worst. The Indian nation was at present very exasperated, and Englishmen would be foolish to mistake the apparent lull as a symptom of the subsidence of the Nationalist movement.

Mr. Goswami said he was grieved to find that the official section of the Labour Party had endorsed Lord Birkenhead's statement, but he was hardly surprised at it. There ought to be a good understanding between sincere Labour men in this country and Indian Nationalists, for there was a very great connection between unemployment here and the economic conditions prevailing in India, but in the presence of Colonel Wedgwood he asked, what good thing the Parliamentary Labour Party had ever done for the common people in India? What had they done for the labourers, the workers, and the peasants of India?

In some complimentary references to Mr. Saklatvala's speech in the House a fortnight ago, Mr. Goswami incidentally observed that he was not himself a Communist, because he was as much against domination by Russia as against domination by England. There were other passages in the speech which showed that he was not such an uncompromising enemy of existing institutions in India as some of those who followed him, and his references to certain trades union legislation clearly provided that something useful was to be extracted even from the present unsatisfactory constitution. He also took credit for having helped to form the Independent Party in Bengal.

Colonel Wedgwood's Reply.

Colonel WEDGWOOD took with alacrity, if not with any striking success, the opportunity to put his side of the case. He expressed his bitter disappointment at Mr. Goswami's speech. He was glad to hear the Swarajists were in favour of a wider franchise, and hoped they would maintain their opposition to communal representation either of the workers or anyone else. He hoped that when the Chief Whip got back to India, they would have an epoch-making pronouncement from the Swarajist party. He wanted them to declare in favour of provincial autonomy and a uniform electorate for the whole of India.

There was a vein of provocative sarcasm running through his speech, and his annoyance at the present Swarajist tendencies seemed to interfere sadly with his lucidity. But he made it quite clear that he would have no truck with a policy of obstructive non-co-operation within the Councils, and he warned the Swarajist Party in rather biting terms that they would find such a policy as ruinous and futile as the original non-co-operation of Mahatma Gandhi. Nothing, said Colonel Wedgwood, would give greater satisfaction to the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy than persistence in the tactics which Mr. Goswami had indicated in his speech. Bureaucrats would be quite content to go on ruling Bengal as they were doing now and they were at least managing to keep the peace between Mahomedans and Hindus. The Swarajists might get a majority in most of the Councils next year, but he would be much surprised if their constituents allowed them to carry out the threat to close up all round. He was confident that they would never persuade Madras to shut up the Legislature, and he was nearly as certain about the Punjab. How would closing up the Council help them in that province, where Mahomedans were against Hindus, Hindus were against Mahomedans, and Sikhs were against both? If the Swaraj party got a majority on the Punjab Council, they could put an end at once to the communal favouritism which now prevailed.

Colonel Wedgwood thought that circumstances will prevent the Swarajists from carrying out their policy of uncompromising obstruction. He expressed the opinion that in the Central Provinces, for instance, Dr. Moonje would, before long, accept ministerial office, and that the same thing would happen elsewhere. If, however, they persisted in non-co-operation, it would only mean that in 1929 the bureaucracy would take advantage of the situation, and instead of getting a step forward India would get a step backward. The Colonel warned his Indian friends that if the policy of refusing responsibility was continued, they would find themselves back in the conditions of the Morley Minto period.

There was a volley of interruptions during part of the time Col. Wedgwood was speaking, and the incoherence of some of them did not add to the clarity of his hasty improvisations. The obscurity might have been cleared a little if he had remained to answer a few questions, but as he had to be back in the House of Commons, he hurried away as soon as he had finished his speech.

The Labour Party Denounced.

Colonel Wedgwood was followed by Mr. CHAMAN LAL, who let himself go without restraint. Mr. Goswami had spoken more in sorrow than in anger, but Mr. Chaman Lal poured forth the vials of his wrath upon Colonel Wedgwood and other so-called friends who, he said, had betrayed the cause of India. These people had forgotten all their pledges and resolutions. The views put before them that

day on behalf of the Labour Party represented a policy of utter bankruptcy. What further confidence would they place in a gang of traitors like MacDonald, Wedgwood, and Olivier? Even their own followers were disgusted with them. Some Labour members of the House of Commons had come to him after the debate on July 9, and had told him that they entirely disapproved of the policy of the front bench.

Mr. Chaman Lal went to accuse Colonel Wedgwood and his friends of trying to hoodwink the Labour masses in this country as to the position and policy of the Swarajist Party. He denied the suggestion that that party was out of sympathy with the workers and pointed out what it had done in the interests of Indian Trades Unions. Colonel Wedgwood had twitted them with what was likely to happen when they had captured all the legislatures and put them out of the action. He (Mr. Chaman Lal) warned them that matters would not stop at that point. There would be a wave of unrest in India, followed by a crisis such as no British Government headed by even half a dozen Birkenheads would be able to withstand. They were determined to shed their own bloods, if need be, in this cause. They could no longer put their trust in such broken reeds as Ramsay MacDonald and Colonel Wedgwood. They must in future rely upon themselves.

Mr. HORNIMAN spoke to much the same effect as Mr. Chaman Lal. He described Colonel Wedgwood's speech as an insult to every self-respecting Indian. All he had put before them was a humiliating policy of "Funk," which was offensive and disgusting in its implications. He had more confidence in the people of India than to believe they would follow the advice of Colonel Wedgwood. As regards Bengal he was convinced that when non-co-operative obstruction had been carried out it would be followed by a further stage, which might be non-violent civil disobedience, or something very different from that which would bring the administration of Bengal by a foreign Government to an absolute and permanent end.

"Madras Mail's" Slandorous Misrepresentation.

In the following article published on the 14th August the *Madras Mail*, an Anglo-Indian daily, vented its spleen against the Swarajists by misrepresenting the speeches of Messrs. Goswami and Chamanlal at the Essex Hall, London.

"In England, Mr. T. C. Goswami, Treasurer of the Swarajist Party, stated that the Swarajist Party were working towards the end of a trial of physical strength with England. When, therefore, he arrived in Madras to-day we were anxious to know something more about this hitherto concealed object of the Swarajist Party. A representative of 'The Madras Mail' to this end, called on Mr. Goswami and asked him to give more details, but Mr. Goswami had been taught to be cautious and begged the questions by saying that he wanted time to study Indian conditions before making a statement. This comes queerly from one who, less than a month ago, was proclaiming to a large audience, composed mainly of Indians, in London that the inevitable climax of Mr. Gandhi's non-co-operation policy was a mighty insurrection in India, and who listened, apparently without protest, to Mr. Chaman Lal's declaration that they 'would, in the end, stir the peasants of India into such a wave of unrest—that they would with their blood win their cause.' It is not strange that one who could speak so definitely and tacitly agree to a definite statement a little more than three weeks ago, should to-day find it necessary to study the situation in India before he makes any statement on his previous utterances? What is the obvious conclusion? Is it not that Mr. Goswami, when he addressed the Essex Hall meeting was, to put it politely, speaking without the book. He wanted, like other demagogues, to create an impression. He should remember that news travels quickly these days, and what he said in London on July 22 is common property in India to-day. To plead ignorance of Indian conditions on the top of such a definite deliverance on those conditions tends to breed incredulity regarding his future utterances.

To the average Indian, however, the importance of Mr. Goswami lies in his Essex Hall revelation of the purpose of the Swarajist Party, a revelation that comes dramatically on the eve of an election in Madras. Does the average Indian want an insurrection in India, does he want the horrors of a bloody revolution? And is he prepared to support a Party, which, under the guise of non-violence, is deliberately pursuing a course and planning policies which must lead to bloodshed, and which is hoping for strife? Men like Mr. Chaman Lal are not to be misunderstood. When they speak of the rise of the peasants they do not speak of a rise against the few Europeans in the country, but against all who believe in constitutional procedure, who prefer law and order, individualism to

communism or Bolshevism. The revolution that Mr. Chaman Lal, and presumably Mr. Goswami too, envisages is a revolution of the "sans culottes," and in that revolution Indians will be the greatest sufferers. We have often stated, and been decried for stating it, that Mr. Gandhi and the Swarajists are heading for revolution. We now have the treasurer of the Swarajist Party admitting this goal, and refusing to explain why the end has hitherto been concealed. Whether they are to reach that goal is for Indians not Europeans to decide. Apathy and indifference will not stop them. Vigorous counter-propaganda and a determination on the part of peace-loving Indians to give no manner of encouragement to the would-be insurrectionists will

Mr. Goswami's Rejoinder.

Mr. Goswami, whose attention was drawn to this article, addressed the following letter to the Editor of that paper warning the journal against indulging in such mischievous misrepresentations, the evil effects of which would recoil on its "own dear partisans" whom it sought to mislead.

"..... As regards the main point of your article, I notice your almost epigrammatic statement that "news travels quickly in these days" and that what I "said in London on July 22 is common property in India to-day." Quite accidentally I came across this morning a summary of my Essex Hall speech in a recent number of, "The Hindu," and I cannot describe it as an unfair report. If that report is "common property in India to-day", it is apparently not the property of "The Madras Mail." So far as I am concerned and so far as any one who is capable of reading between the lines is concerned—the psychological explanation of your strange article is to be found in what I regard as its key-sentence; you speak of my speech as a "revelation that comes diametrically on the eve of an election in Madras." I suppose it does; and I am sure your comment on it will be treated as very dramatic. Attempts to save a country from "the horrors of a bloody revolution" are quite familiar enterprises in electioneering. You must have heard of a new party in England calling themselves "British Fascists," who are not inappropriately referred to as "B. F.s."

"I began my Essex Hall speech, which I made at the request of the London Indian Association and in the presence, among others, of the Rt. Hon'ble Colonel Josiah Wedgwood, who took part in the discussion, by clearly stating that it was impossible for me to make any statement on behalf of the Swarajya Party, as I had no opportunity of consulting the leaders since Lord Birkenhead's statement in the House of Lords and that I could only say what I thought would be the probable course that the Swarajists would take. And I said that I expected the Swaraj Party to continue its policy of resistance, to contest the General Elections in 1926 with a view to securing majorities in all the Legislatures and to create a constitutional deadlock unless an honourable settlement was meanwhile arrived at. I did say on that occasion—as I have said frequently—that those who are in authority ought to realise that they were "exhausting the last stages of constitutional struggle in our country" and that the Swaraj Party always stood for "a peaceful adjustment of interest." The main purpose of my speech was, however, to expose the hollowness of the latest arguments of the front bench Labour Mr. P.'s that the Swarajists were afraid of democracy and that these M. P.'s were the divinely ordained trustees for the "labourers and peasants" in whose interest they had so far failed to do anything substantial. Either your informant is wrong, or the writer of your editorial has allowed himself a little more latitude in the matter of treatment of facts than is considered permissible even by your fellow Anglo-Indian journalists.

"You have further brought in the name of my friend Dewan Chaman Lal, and have dared to describe him as the enemy of not only all Englishmen but also of all who believe in the various things other than Bolshevism. It is unlikely that he will see your article; he is probably still in Europe. But I cannot let this statement pass unchallenged. It is a cowardly slander. His actions, like mine, have been in the open, in the full blaze of publicity. You may differ from our views; and you may censure our actions; but it is only gentlemanly to confine your criticism and censure to actual facts. What to me is ridiculous nonsense may have a mischievous effect not only on your political opponents, but—as frequently happens in the end—on those dear partisans whom you seek to mislead. As opponents of Swarajism, Anglo-Indian Journalism is only one of the factors—and a minor one—we have to contend against".

The British Commonwealth Labour Conference

The British Commonwealth Labour Conference began its meetings on the 27th July 1925 in the rooms of the Empire Parliamentary Association. The Indian Delegates were Mr. M. N. Joshi and Dewan Chaman Lal. Mr. Polak and Mr. Saklatvala were permitted to attend the conference as advisers to the two Indian Delegates. The conference lasted for one week. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald opened the proceedings.

Self-Government for India.

On the 28th July the question of the grant of self-government to the subject peoples within the Commonwealth was raised by Dewan Chamanlal who moved the following resolution :—

"The delegates at the Conference having heard the views of the Indian delegates recommend their constituent bodies to support the demand of India for the immediate grant of self-government."

The question of Indian self-government was not on the original agenda for discussion. Dewan Chamanlal insisted at a private meeting of the delegates on its being brought forward with the result that he was allowed to move the above resolution which he supported with a powerful speech.

He severely condemned the Labour Party's policy towards India and demanded the assertion of the principle of self-determination and a pledge of support to the policy of immediate self-government. He denounced the Labour Government for the Bengal Ordinance and refusal of a round table conference and said the Labour Party in future must avoid such deplorable mistakes.

Mr. Joshi made a speech in support of this resolution which, at his suggestion, was referred to a committee, which recommended the passing of a resolution as far as India was concerned, but recommended that as far as other subject peoples were concerned the subject should be discussed in the next conference after consultation with the respective labour organisations.

Representation of Working Classes.

The next subject discussed was the position of the Commonwealth as regards the conventions and recommendations passed by the International Labour Organisation. Mr. Joshi took part in this discussion and pressed his point regarding the desirability of the representatives of the working classes in the Dependencies and Mandated Territories being invited to attend International Labour Conferences. The point was accepted by the conference.

Equal Treatment for Indians.

Mr. Joshi opened the discussion on the position of Indians in British colonies and proposed a resolution that no disabilities of any kind should be placed upon any persons already settled in any British colony on the ground of race or colour. The resolution was referred to a committee which was disinclined to recommend the passing of any resolution on the general question, which may be raised at the next Conference. Mr. Joshi then tried to get the committee to pass a resolution recommending a Round Table Conference for the discussion of the position of Indians in South Africa, but as the South African delegate would not agree to the resolution and as the Committee was unwilling to recommend the passing of the resolution, by a majority, in a Conference the constitution of which was not fixed and without the delegates

having definite mandates, they recommended that the Secretary of the Conference should write to the Trade Union Congress in India and in South Africa to arrange a joint meeting of their representatives to discuss the position and if anything is not done before the next Conference then the Conference should discuss the question again. Mr. Joshi protested against the attitude of the Conference in refusing to take up a just attitude for fear of offending the South African delegate.

Annual Conference of the Labour Party

The Annual Conference of the Labour Party which was holding its Session at Liverpool adopted a resolution on the 30th November 1925 recognising the right of India to self-determination and to the full privileges of Self-Government. The resolution was adopted without any debate.

Mr. George Lansbury who moved the resolution said :—"You may hold down India by bayonets and bombs, but nations struggling for freedom have often been able to overcome the most merciless tyranny and I do not believe that the British Empire can much longer hold India, as it is to-day." India is a country which had to submit to a conquest of the worst form, although it had a civilisation much older than that of Britain. He did not believe that British rule in India had benefited either the British or the Indians, although it might have benefited a certain group of men and women who lived parasitical lives.

Largely owing to our own policy the Indians were to a great extent uneducated, but one thing they did understand was that they were ruled by a Government over which they had precious little control and that they were kept down by a foreign army of occupation which required one-half of their total revenue to maintain. He did not believe that India could be held much longer under these conditions.

Mr. Fenner Brockway, who seconded, read a telegram from Allahabad on behalf of the Swaraj Party demanding full dominion status.

The following is the text of the resolution :—

Self-determination for India.

"The Conference recognises the right of the Indian peoples for full self-Government and self-determination. It welcomes the declarations of representative Indian leaders in favour of free and equal partnership with other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It expresses the opinion that the policy of the British Government should be co-operation with Indian people in this object. It declares its agreement with the conclusions of the Minority of the Reforms Committee, that the defects inherent in the Government of India Act cannot be remedied satisfactorily by amendment of the Act or the Rules thereunder. It is convinced that the Indian political situation makes it imperative that immediate steps should be taken to place the Indian Constitution on a permanent basis, and with a view to a new atmosphere of friendly discussion, that all coercive measures and repressive legislation be withdrawn. It notes the Secretary of State's declaration that the Government would most carefully examine any Constitution framed by Indians, carrying a fair measure of general agreement, but regrets that this invitation in effect, was delayed until 1929. It asks him to examine the Commonwealth of India Bill and any other proposals submitted, and to call a Conference of representatives of various Indian Parties, with a view to the immediate application of a Constitution in accordance with the wishes of the Indian people."

The Legislative Assembly

SIMLA—20TH AUGUST 1925.

H. E. Lord Reading opened the autumn session of the Indian Legislature in an important speech lasting an hour. The galleries of the Legislative Assembly were overcrowded by visitors who had assembled since half past nine.

The Viceroy set forth before the Legislative Assembly the future policy of the Government as regards the Reforms, and stated in clear terms that no question of change could be considered before the statutory limit of 1929.

His discussions in England—said Lord Reading—confirmed his opinion. No party would yield to pressure for any premature concession. All were sympathetic towards India, but the only road to the ultimate goal was through friendly co-operation. The appointment of the Statutory Commission at this stage would only, in his opinion, result in disappointment.

Discussing the Minority and Majority Reports of the Muddiman Committee Lord Reading described the recommendations of the Minority as unpractical and declared that his Government had made up its mind to give effect to the suggestions of the Majority.

The Viceroy announced the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate the problem of Indian Currency and Exchange.

After paying tributes of regret for the death of Mr. C. R. Das, Sir S. N. Bannerjee, K. B. Shamsuz-Zoha, Sir L. Miller and Lord Rawlinson, H. E. the Viceroy said :—

“Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly, in pursuance of the provisions of the Government of India Act, you have been called upon for the first time to elect your President on the 22nd day of this month and it is therefore fitting for me, on this occasion, to express my own and my Government's appreciation of the services which have been rendered—not only to the Assembly, but also to the Provincial Legislative Councils throughout India,—by the first President of the Legislative Assembly. The Legislative bodies established under the Government of India Act were so different in their composition from those set up under the earlier Acts of Parliament that it was thought right to make provision for a President who should be indubitably independent of the Government, a person clear of all possible suspicion of being even unconsciously biased in favour of the Government. At the same time it was recognised, that on the standard set by the first Presidents of the different Legislative bodies and, more particularly, on the standard set by the first President of the Legislative Assembly the future of the Assembly and of the Legislative bodies in the Provinces would greatly depend. It was essential that the first President of the Assembly should be a man liberally versed, not only in the written rules, but also in the unwritten tradition of the Mother of Parliaments so that in the time allotted to him by the Statute, he might establish in this Assembly, a high standard of public order, a true appreciation of the dignity and responsibilities of the Chamber and a perfect confidence in the rigid impartiality for the chair, and further that he might foster in every member of the Assembly a deep sense of regard not only for the rights, but also for the feelings of every other member of the Chamber, a sense of regard which should remain unaffected even in the extreme heat of party controversy.

Tribute to Sir Frederick Whyte.

“Gentlemen, to my great regret it has not been my privilege to attend your proceedings in person, but in addition to your printed proceedings, a daily report reaches me

of your doings. Alike from these sources and from the testimony of official and non-official members of this Assembly, and also of the distinguished visitors from many parts of the world, who have witnessed your proceedings, I am able to say with confidence that Sir Frederick Whyte has discharged, to the utmost, the very heavy responsibilities laid upon him as the first President of the Legislative Assembly, and I welcome this opportunity of tendering to him my thanks and the thanks of my Government for his very notable achievement. If I may be allowed to offer advice to his successor it is that he must maintain the tradition, which has been established for your Chamber by your first President and to this end I ask you, gentlemen of the Assembly, to give to your new President in his difficult task the generous co-operation which you have always accorded to your first President.

"I pass now to a brief review of the affairs of India. I am glad to say that our relations with the neighbouring States remain cordial and that no questions of importance are outstanding. I wish I could report an equal absence of controversial matter in regard to the position of Indians in South Africa. At the moment I should not be well-advised to say more than that my Government is watching the situation closely and is still in communication with the Government of South Africa.

The Cotton Mills Crisis.

"In internal affairs we have been faced recently with some industrial depression. Fortunately this has not been associated with any failure of Indian harvests and exports have been well maintained. The depression in Indian industries appears to be a phase of a world-wide movement throughout the world. Industries are experiencing the difficulties of adjusting themselves to the new post-war conditions which India could not expect to escape. India has, in fact, been fortunate that this change has not come to her so quickly or so severely as in many other countries, and owing to a succession of good harvests, there is a reserve of buying power in the country. Nevertheless the process of adjustment is difficult and the condition of several of these industries will come before you. Public attention has recently been directed to the great cotton mill industry which after a period of unexampled prosperity and expansion is now experiencing a reaction. My Government has been watching the position closely and I have consented to receive a deputation early next week from the mill-owners of Bombay and Ahmedabad. In the circumstances I will reserve any further observations.

Tariff Board's Reports.

"Four reports by the Tariff Boards, marked by that thoroughness which I have learned to expect from its work, have been published and the conclusions of my Government on three of them have been made public. A fifth report dealing with steel has just been received and the proposals in regard to it will be placed before you in the course of the session. You will also be asked to consider a Coal Grading Bill, framed on the recommendations of the Coal Committee, and designed to rehabilitate Indian coal in the overseas markets. My Government, while giving due attention to industries in the restricted sense of the term, are determined, so far as circumstances permit, not to neglect the interests of what is really the greatest of all Indian industries, namely, agriculture. I know from my discussions with the Secretary of State that my Government can rely upon his most cordial support of this policy. The direct responsibility of the Government of India for the agricultural development in the Provinces ceased with the inception of the Reforms. In view, however, of the paramount importance of agriculture as the basic industry of the people of India, of the improbability of Provincial Governments being in a position to undertake research on the scale required, and of the necessity for co-ordinating activities in the wide field of agricultural development, the Central Government must continue to play an important part in agricultural progress. Their present agricultural policy is mainly directed to fostering research and undertaking work which is outside the normal ambit of provincial activities by reason of its All-India character. With the improvement this year in our finances we have been able to increase very considerably our support of the work of agriculture. The Agricultural Institute at Pusa is expanding its work of research, which is the basis and condition of all progress. That work has already borne remarkable fruit. New varieties of crops (I would instance sugar-cane and wheat) the product of careful research and experiment in our laboratories and experimental farms, have added within the past few years rupees to the wealth of the agriculturist and these achievements point the way to still more wonderful possibilities.

Agricultural Conditions.

"Agriculture in India must in the main depend on cattle for its motive power and what is of vital importance is not an increase in the numerical strength

cattle, but an improvement in quality. This problem is being steadily attacked from more than one angle in the Cattle Breeding and Dairy Farms under the Government of India, but apart from direct activities I conceive that one of the most important functions of a Central Government in respect of a great All-India interest is to facilitate the co-ordination of provincial efforts. My Government have some time past had under consideration a proposal for the establishment of an All-India agricultural organisation, which would help towards co-ordinating the activities of the various Provincial Departments of Agriculture, promote research, agricultural education, co-operation and other established aids to agriculture, and serve as a medium for agricultural propaganda throughout the country. With the object of obtaining the views of representative and responsible authorities from all parts of the country, before a definite scheme is formulated, it has been decided to refer this proposal to the Board of Agriculture, at its next meeting, which will be held at Pusa in December of this year. It is hoped that, in addition to the regular Provincial Representatives, the Ministers of Agriculture of the various Provinces will also be able to attend.

Civil Justice Committee's Recommendations.

"The action taken by the Government on the report of the Civil Justice Committee, presided over by Mr. Justice Rankin, will be a matter of interest to you. I have no doubt that many of you have studied that report and recognise the wide extent of the ground it covers. Many of the recommendations can be put into effect by Local Governments, the High Courts and the presiding officers of the courts of justice throughout the country. In some cases we have decided to reduce the proposals of the Committee to the concrete form of Bills, which will come before you during this session. In others we have addressed the Local Governments and the High Courts and shall prepare Bills for your consideration after we have received their opinions. I have mentioned before the great importance which attaches the work of this Committee and the value of the reactions which must follow on improvements in the machinery for the administration of civil justice. I wish now to express my high appreciation of the Committee.

"Last January I announced that, in view of the opinion expressed in the Assembly regarding the need of an economic enquiry, my Government had decided to appoint a small Committee to report on the material which exists for holding an enquiry into the economic conditions of the people of India, the feasibility of instituting an enquiry of this character and the manner in which it could be carried out. This Committee has been at work during the last few months under the Chairmanship of Sir M. Visvesvarayya and has just completed its report, which is now in the press. It is the intention of the Government to publish the report at an early date and the Committee's recommendations will be examined without delay. I must express my appreciation of the expedition with which the Committee have dealt with this complicated subject.

A Royal Commission on Currency Problem

"When I addressed you last, I dwelt at some length on the difficult questions of Currency and Exchange and I announced the intention of the Government to appoint an authoritative committee to consider the subject of the Rupee Exchange as soon as the world economic factors appeared sufficiently stable to justify the formulation of a new policy. With the return of Sterling to a parity with gold there is fulfilled one of the most important conditions requisite for a fruitful re-examination of our Indian problems. The position has been considered in consultation with the Secretary of State and I am now able to announce that His Majesty the King has approved the appointment of a Royal Commission on Indian Currency. The terms of reference to the Commission will be to examine the Indian exchange and currency system and practice, to consider whether any modifications are desirable in the interests of India and to make recommendations. It will be seen that the terms of reference are wide enough to admit the consideration of all important questions of currency policy and that the membership of the Commission also ensures the adequate representation of Indian opinion. I am glad to inform you that the Right Hon. Hilton Young will act as Chairman and the following gentlemen have consented to serve as Members of the Commission:—Professor J. C. Coyajee, Sir Manekjee Dadabhy, Sir Reginald Watt, Sir Rajendra Nath Mukherji, Sir Alexander Murray, Mr. W. E. Preston, Sir Henry Strakosch, Sir Purshotomdas Thakurdas and Sir Noroot Warren. The Joint-Secretaries will be Mr. Iyer of the Indian Finance Department and Mr. Baxter of the India Office. It will be apparent that every care has been taken to obtain an independent and impartial examination of this important subject. The Commission will, it is expected, commence work next October.

Proposal for an Indian Sandhurst.

"There is one other important enquiry to which I must refer. The Government of India recently appointed a Committee which has come to be known as the Indian Sandhurst Committee. The investigations of the Committee will embrace not only the whole subject of the best and most suitable means of training Indians to hold worthily and efficiently His Majesty's Commission, but also the question of what measures should be adopted in order to attract the best type of Indian youth, in greater numbers than are at present forthcoming, to a military career. I attach great importance to the enterprise upon which the Committee are embarking. If they are successful it may be said that they will, to the extent of their achievement, help India forward in the path of progress. The Committee is widely representative of different branches of Indian opinion and I am glad to note that in this important enquiry we shall have the assistance of the Leader of the Swarajist Party. I must express gratification that he is prepared to contribute to the elucidation of the problems involved, but I should not think of seeking to press the implication of his action further than he himself wished. His own statement of the reasons for the course he has adopted should, in my judgment, preclude any more extended inferences.

"The establishment of a Public Service Commission is being actively pursued in correspondence with the Secretary of State and I have every hope that it will shortly be possible to make an announcement detailing its function, its constitution and its personnel. I am aware that great importance is attributed to the Commission, both by the public and the members of the Public Service. I believe that it will provide an independent and impartial tribunal for the examination of the Services' grievances.

The Sikh Settlement.

"Among other matters of importance with which my mind was naturally much preoccupied at the time of my departure for England, though even then I recognised and welcomed tendencies of a happier augury, was the situation relating to the religious endowments of the Sikh Community and the various issues connected with it. During my absence I watched the progress of events with keen and sympathetic interest. It is a matter of great gratification to me that on my return I find that the hope of an improvement in the situation has been realised or is in a fair way to be realised. During the whole course of the events and controversies which have engaged public attention—and sometimes I regret to say disturbed the public peace in the Punjab—the Government of the Punjab and my own Government have been animated by a constant and single desire to promote, by every means in our power, a stable and equitable and a friendly settlement of all the matters in issue, which shall do justice to the claims of all the interests legitimately concerned and which, in particular, shall restore the traditional relations of good understanding and mutual confidence between the Government and the Sikh community. It is my belief that those relations, glorious in war and no less renowned in peace, whatever misunderstandings have arisen and whatever unfortunate incidents have occurred, have never in truth suffered more than a partial and temporary disturbance, and I welcome every prospect of their complete renewal and consolidation.

"The immediate and tangible fruit of these changed conditions has been the enactment of a measure by the Punjab Legislative Council, on the motion of a private member belonging to the Sikh community, and in the formulation of which the Punjab Government rendered assistance, which has been warmly acknowledged, to regulate the management of the Sikh Religious Endowments. This measure has received so large, and I may say, so overwhelming a preponderance of support from the interests, directly or indirectly concerned, as to leave no doubt of its general acceptance and it has received the assent of the Governor-General. The Government of the Punjab have taken the opportunity of the passing of this measure to make a generous offer to those persons under the influence of the agitation and I trust that

ceremonial reading of the Sikh scriptures at the Government has been to interpose no obstacle there or elsewhere to the free observance of religious ceremonies that will conflict with well-established rights and liberties. I will say no more on a subject, which might revive old controversies than that I have every hope and confidence that with the conclusion of the ceremony I have referred to and the release of the persons detained in the Nabha State, we may all now unite to treat this incident as a closed chapter. A Bill will be

laid before you in the course of the present session the object of which it to validate such of the provisions of the Punjab Act as are beyond the competence of the Local Legislature and I am confident that a measure which offers so fair a prospect of a practical and equitable settlement of a momentous and complex issue, and which is supported by so weighty a body of public opinion, will receive also your ratification and endorsement.

"Much has been achieved and we may survey with legitimate satisfaction the progress recorded, rendering due acknowledgments to the sympathetic consideration and the indefatigable labours of His Excellency Sir Malcolm Hailey and the Government of the Punjab, and to the common sense, mutual forbearance and public spirit of all concerned, which have made it possible. I trust your deliberations will complete a legislative Act which will not only afford a just and satisfactory solution of the matters it expressly contemplates, but will also contribute powerfully to the union and reconciliation of diverse aims in other spheres of interest. If we persevere and redouble our efforts in the path of mutual forbearance and understanding I have every confidence that the future will crown our labours.

The London Conversations.

"My main purpose in requesting your attendance to-day was in order that I may address you specially upon the events connected with my visit to England. When I received the invitation from His Majesty's Government to return to England I gladly availed myself of it. I had been in India over four years and had seen several changes of Government in England during this short period. A general election in autumn had just installed a new Government in office, the fifth with which I have had the privilege of serving. It seemed to me eminently desirable in the interests of India that I should take the opportunity for the first time afforded to one holding my high office. During my stay in England I had many conferences and discussions with the Secretary of State and I also had the great advantage of representing the situation in India, as I conceived it, to the Prime Minister and also to the Cabinet. Towards the end of my visit the Secretary of State made an important pronouncement in the House of Lords upon Indian affairs. The speech undoubtedly aroused unusual interest in Parliament and the country. It was the first review by the Secretary of State of the general situation in India since he had assumed his high office, and it had been deferred until after the conclusion of the conferences with me. In addition it possessed a special attraction by reason of the forceful personality and intellectual capacity of the Secretary of State. You will have observed that His Lordship was careful to state that he was not announcing or purporting to announce decisions or conclusions. Nevertheless it cannot be doubted that as a survey of the situation it formed an important event in the history of political development in India. It was made after a careful study of the problems and after a full consideration of the views which I had presented in numerous conferences as the result of my experience in India. The speech in the House of Lords was followed almost immediately by one in the Commons. I do not know whether many of you have had the opportunity of studying the report of the debate which was of special interest to India. It showed, as it appeared to me, a growing appreciation and a sympathetic understanding of the complexities and difficulties of Indian political problems. You will have gathered from the Parliamentary reports that the general lines of the pronouncement were not seriously challenged in the British Parliament. I confess that I have therefore been somewhat disappointed, on a perusal of the reported speeches of the political leaders in India and of the articles in the public press, to find that the speech has been received in some quarters in so critical a spirit. The impression on my mind is that its importance and value to India have not been sufficiently appreciated.

Lord Birkenhead's Statement.

"I look upon the Secretary of State's address as a message of sympathetic encouragement to India, at least to those who are desirous of advancing to responsible Self-Government within the British Empire. It is an emphatic indication that political opinion in England stands firm upon the declarations made in 1917 and in 1919, without distinction of political parties. I shall endeavour to place before you a survey of the situation as it presents itself to me to-day. I trust I am not too optimistic in my belief that a temperate examination of the problems in an atmosphere, free from suspicion and prejudice, may lead to more earnest and sincere co-operation and good-will from Indian politicians. I cannot hope to convince all sections of those who take an interest in public affairs. But if we are to advance towards a solution of our problems we must get rid of the elements of bitterness and suspicion, which breed their evil progeny, alas, too rapidly, and try whether the spirit of goodwill may not prove a solvent for the difficulties

which have hitherto seemed to defy solution. I would ask those who may differ from me to bend their minds for a moment towards me and to weigh the observations based upon the experience of a life-time and applied to Indian affairs by one, who claims to be devoted to India and her interests.

"I came to India charged with the duty of helping to establish the Reformed Constitution and of assisting the country along the road of advance mapped out in the declaration of August 1917. The first great measure in pursuance of the new policy had been embodied in an Act of Parliament. It was unfortunate that this new system was launched at a period when the atmosphere was charged with bitterness and animosity. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the difficulties it encountered from the moment of its birth. They are still fresh in our minds. It suffices for the moment to recall that it met with determined opposition from certain sections of the community, directed at first from without the Councils and latterly also from within. Remember that this was a newly fashioned constitution, indeed a constitutional experiment without precedent, designed to meet the peculiar complexities of the situation in India. It had no doubt its imperfections, but it was the product of deep thought and the outcome of a genuine desire on the part of the British Parliament to give effect to the patriotic aspirations of the Indian political leaders and to initiate a system of self-governing institutions.

The Muddiman Enquiry

"Much of the criticism directed against the Constitution was clearly in the nature of a protest against the refusal to grant complete Self-Government at one step, but the ranks of the critics were also swelled by those who argued that the system did not fulfil the intentions of its authors and suffered from obvious defects which should be removed. These charges deserved examination and after three years' experience of the new constitution, my Government, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, decided that an enquiry should be made, not with a view to altering the structure, but for the purpose of determining whether any measures could be advised whereby the system might work more smoothly and efficiently. These problems were examined by the Reforms Enquiry Committee, to whose labours both my Government, and all those who are interested in the working of the Constitution, owe a debt of gratitude. I regret that the members of the Committee were unable to come to unanimous conclusions. The majority have made a series of recommendations which, taken broadly, appear to be acknowledged as suggesting improvements on the existing practice. They are fashioned with a genuine desire to improve the present machinery. I do not of course claim for them infallibility or deny that they must be examined in detail with some care. My Government are prepared to accept in substance the view of the majority that the Constitution should be maintained and amended, where necessary, in order to remove the defects in its working, on the lines recommended by them. My Government cannot, at present, commit itself to all the individual recommendations or to the form or method by which they should be carried into effect inasmuch as there has not been sufficient time for a full consideration of them with the authorities concerned, or even by me with my Council. An opportunity will be afforded to the Legislature for debating this policy, and every consideration will be given to the views presented to us before final conclusions are reached. The Minority, consisting of gentlemen whose views are entitled to receive and have received the most careful examination of myself and my Government and let me add of Lord Birkenhead, have stated that they have no objection to many of the proposals of their colleagues, but that they were unable to accept the report of the majority, because they desired to progress more rapidly and by different methods. In their opinion no substantial results will be produced by the process of amendment of the defects recommended by the Majority. Briefly the Minority ask whether the Constitution should not be put on a permanent basis with provisions for automatic progress in the future, and they are in favour of a system of Provincial Autonomy. They press for an early enquiry with a view to fulfilling these aspirations. To the subject of Provincial Autonomy I shall return after. It is sufficient to say, at this stage, that the Minority, mindful of the terms of reference, do not present it as a practical and fully considered scheme but content themselves with putting it forward as an ideal. The steps for its attainment clearly demand further investigation. In effect, therefore, the recommendations of the Minority amount to a demand for an early and authoritative enquiry, with a view to a revision of the Constitution. The issue at the moment between them and the Government of India is largely one of time for the appointment of a Commission. It has been laid down in the Government of India Act that in 1929, that is in four years from the present time, there must be a full enquiry into the Constitution, such as the Minority desire. But the Minority say that they

wish the enquiry to take place at an early date. I understand their impatience, but my Government and I after most carefully weighing their views, have reached the conclusion that the moment for an enquiry has not yet arrived. The enquiry contemplated by the Act will be a genuine and an impartial enquiry; nothing will be prejudged. It will proceed upon the facts for the situation as ascertained upon the evidence produced before the tribunal and here I must remind you of the words of the preamble to the Government of India Act, which have already been quoted by the Secretary of State: "Whereas the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom the new opportunities of service are conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility." If these are to be the principles to guide the Commission to its judgment I cannot think, as a friend of India, that it should commence its enquiries immediately.

"If the judgment of the British Parliament were to be pronounced upon the present evidence, I fear that it could but result in disappointment. I have not abandoned hope that as the days proceed evidence of a spirit of co-operation may yet be forthcoming from that large section of political opinion, which has hitherto stood aloof and that it may be manifested that the political attitude of those who have hitherto declined to shoulder any responsibility may undergo a change.

"I know that there is a school of thought in India which preaches incessantly that nothing is to be won from England save by force or threats. Believe me, that is a profound mistake and if persisted in, cannot, but embitter the relations of the two countries. The Reforms took their origin in England in a spirit of goodwill, not of fear and of optimism, nor of opportunism. The history of the last few years has damped the hopes and dimmed the expectations of many of those in England who wish India well, but those hopes can be rekindled, those expectations can be recreated if India shows the hand of friendship, instead of menace.

Question of Re-Examination of the Constitution.

"While I am sure that the present would be a most inappropriate moment to hold the Statutory Enquiry, I wish to re-emphasise what was made abundantly plain by the Secretary of State in his speech, that there is no special sanctity attaching to the year 1929. The re-examination of the constitution may take place at any time not later than 1929, when the British Government are persuaded that there has been a genuine co-operation of responsible Indian political leaders in working the existing Constitution and when a sufficient experience of these new, and still largely untried, conditions has been gathered to form the basis of a considered judgment and to enable proposals for the future, to be made with some confidence. Is it not worth while to make a real attempt to wipe out past controversies and to unite in an effort to test the system at present established? In the Secretary of State's words, "we desire and request goodwill, nor shall we be niggardly bargainers if we meet with that generous friendship, which is near and dear to our hearts." The desire to help India along the road indicated remains unchanged. I had opportunities of discussing with many leaders of political thought in England, of varied political views. Throughout I was impressed on the one hand by the sympathetic goodwill manifested towards India and Indians generally, and on the other by the determination not to be hurried by threats into premature concessions. I have long been confident that it is through friendly co-operation alone that India will advance to the ultimate goal desired. The events of the recent years and my visit to England have served to confirm this view. I most earnestly commend it as a policy to the Legislature and to the country. I believe that the present moment is specially favourable for a combined effort to work the constitution. Since the Committee reported two new factors have supervened, which should be an encouragement, and are well worthy of your consideration.

Remission of provincial contributions

"Among the many handicaps under which the new system has suffered none perhaps was greater than the financial stringency which dogged its early years. In administration a policy without resources is barren. Too often the Ministers found that from lack of money they could not give effect to their ideas in the field or government transferred to their charge. Hampered by financial difficulties they were exposed to the criticism of having achieved nothing. Fortunately the period of financial stringency, the legacy of the War, seems to be passing away. This year my Government has been able to make a notable beginning in the remission of Provincial Contributions and thereby to place at the disposal of the various provinces, additional resources, a large part of which, it may be hoped will be available for the amelioration of social conditions and for

nation-building activities, in short for those branches of the administration which have been transferred to popular control. I trust that these new resources will strengthen the position of Ministers.

Reorganisation of the Services

"There is one other change of importance which I must not omit to mention. I must confess that I have been surprised to find that so little public attention has been directed to one of the proposals of the Lee Commission, the practical effect of which will soon begin to make itself felt. It had been one of the complaints of Ministers that the organisation of their superior services through which their departments were administered, lay not in their hands, but in those of the Secretary of State. It was the latter who recruited them and who determined their rates of pay and their numbers. We are now to take steps to give effect in this respect to the principle laid down by the Joint Select Committee of Parliament, that ministers should have the fullest opportunity of managing that field of Government which was entrusted to their care. Recruitment by the Secretary of State for the Indian Educational Service, the Indian Agricultural Service, the Veterinary Service, the Buildings and Roads Branch of the Indian Service of Engineers, and, in Bombay and Burma, for the Indian Forest Service, has ceased. In these important branches of the administration the Ministers will be authorised to start building up, by new recruitment, their own provincial services, subject only to such restrictions as experience shows to be necessary for safeguarding the integrity, the independence, and the efficiency, of the public services.

"The problem presented by the Indian Medical Service is more difficult, but here too the principle of establishing Provincial Medical Services has been accepted subject to certain conditions which are still under consideration. The combined effect of these changes will become increasingly apparent every year and I am sure that what seems to me at present to be an inadequate appreciation of their importance will rapidly disappear.

"I cannot pass from these observations on to the future of the services without placing on record my high appreciation of the loyal assistance which has been rendered by the members of the Services, and will, I am convinced, continue to be rendered in the working of the new constitution. Without their help the difficulties, already serious enough, would have been stupendous, if not insuperable. For the reasons indicated above I believe that the system of Dyarchy will be found to work in future more efficiently and smoothly and Ministers will in these respects no longer have grounds for complaint that the power and responsibility entrusted to them are impaired by other influences. In any event I have no doubt it is too early yet to pronounce a final verdict as to Dyarchy's failure or success. On a careful survey of the whole situation and a study of the report of the Local Governments I have come to the conclusion that Dyarchy, whatever its deficiencies may be, has so far proved more successful in its operations than some of its friends and most of its critics could have expected. We shall be in a far better position in a comparatively short time to form a final judgment if the system is worked in the future with general good-will and co-operation.

Eastern and Western Ideals.

"In a notable passage in his speech, Lord Birkenhead disclaimed on behalf of the British Parliament any monopoly in the art of framing constitutions and he invited Indians to contribute if they could do so, their own solution. He invited them, to quote his words "to produce a constitution which carries behind it a fair measure of general agreement among the great people of India." He gave the assurance that such a contribution to solve the problem would be most carefully examined by the Government of India, by himself and by the Commission, whenever that body may be assembled. The time which may elapse before a re-examination of the Constitutions whenever that may happen, could not be better occupied by public men in India than by devoting serious practical thought to these problems. If the British people, working on their own experience, have set up institutions in India, based on Western models, the aspirations of India politicians, towards the establishment of Responsible Self-Government within Empire as the ultimate goal. Responsible Self-Government, based on the Parliamentary institution, is the product of Western thought and experience. It is often contended that we are seeking to arrive at the final destination by imposing ideas on India, which are alien to its genius. We are not wedded to our own methods of attaining our object. Whatever may be proposed will be the subject of the most careful examination by the Government of India and eventually by the Commission, before it is submitted to the British Parliament. The Commission should know whether there is any general consensus

of opinion among the various classes and communities of India as to the direction in which the development of Self-Government within the Empire should be sought. Should we persevere in our proposed course or is there an alternative line of advance which would be more in accordance with Indian ideas and would receive the support of the numerous interests concerned? If any alternative methods are to be suggested, much hard thinking is required. Constitutional problems are not solved by a phrase. Account must be taken of the unparalleled complexities, and the diversities of race, the diversities of religion, the striking diversities of intellectual development and a social organisation which separates classes with a rigidity unknown in any other great country. It must be kept steadily in mind that it is the primary duty of the Government to provide security against external aggression and to preserve peace and order within its territories and, in India, it is imperative that adequate means should be devised for the protection of minorities. No greater problem in Self-Government has ever been set before a people. No problem has ever more assuredly required accurate and practical thinking.

Demand for Provincial Autonomy.

"There are many in India at the present moment who hold that the solution lies in Provincial Autonomy. The principle that local affairs should be administered by Local Governments is one that commands general acceptance, but if we are to avoid disintegration, a danger that the history of India constantly emphasises, there must in my judgment, be a strong Central Government capable of exercising a legitimate degree of supervision and control. The relations of such a Government to a number of so-called autonomous provincial Governments have not yet been thought out. It can scarcely be contemplated even by the most ardent friends of Provincial Autonomy that there should be nine or more and, as some contend many more, separate and independent Provincial Governments, entirely free in all directions from supervision and control. Before any scheme of Provincial Autonomy could be established, the functions that should be entrusted to them and the degree of supervision and control to be exercised over them must be explored with the patience. There is an unlimited field of work waiting for those who, like the minority of the Reforms Enquiry Committee, believe that the present Constitution must be radically amended. Meantime, a close contact with the practical working of the present machine will provide a useful corrective against too great an obsession with theory, which history shows to be a danger ever lurking in wait for the drafter of Constitutions.

"Before I close I would draw attention to an attitude not uncommon among politicians, that the programme and conditions of advance laid down in the preamble of the Government of India Act are a humiliation to Indians and that the prescription of successive stages and the testing of each stage by result is a reflection on the capacity of Indians. Be it remembered that we are engaged on a problem new to India and new also to the British Parliament. I think the nature of the problem as it presents itself to the British people, is not fully appreciated by those who express themselves as humiliated. They assume that the path to Self-Government lies along a broad metalled road and that, if they could only be freed from the impediments and restrictions imposed by the present form of Government, they could run safely, rapidly, and directly, to their goal. To my mind the problem presents itself under a different figure. I think rather of a man picking his way through unexplored regions, towards his destination, which glimmers faint, but clear in the distance. He halts on firm ground and seeks the next spot to which he can safely entrust himself. A rash step may engulf him or delay his progress indefinitely. His advance may not be rapid, but it is well and surely planned. As he advances, experience teaches him to distinguish more certainly and quickly the firm ground from the treacherous surface and so he wins to his ultimate goal.

Conclusion

"Gentlemen, if I may strike a personal note the close of my period of office is rapidly approaching and my future opportunities of addressing you, the Members of the Indian Legislature, must necessarily be few. I have spoken to you to-day from the conviction of my heart and I trust, without rousing a tinge of bitterness or animosity. I have expressed to you the thoughts of one, who whatever mistakes or errors he may have committed, has a warm affection for India and a deep devotion to her interests. For these reasons I have been desirous of carrying you with me along the only avenue which, in my judgment, can lead to the promised land, to the proud heights of India's destination. It is my earnest prayer that India, with the co-operation of all of us, of every race, community and interest, that wish her well, may avoid the pitfalls that beset her path and win through to the goal to which her face is set."

SIMLA—22ND AUGUST 1925.

Mr. Patel Elected President

The first meeting of the Autumn Session of the Legislative Assembly took place on the 22nd August when Mr. V. J. Patel (Swarajist) was elected President with 58 votes, defeating Mr. Rangachariar by two votes.

At the outset Pt. Nehru referred in very feeling terms to the death of Mr. C. R. Das and Sir S. N. Bannerjee. He was followed Sir S. Iyer, Sir A. Muddiman, Sir F. Whyte, Sir D. Lindsay and Mr. Jinnah, all of whom associated with Pt. Nehru in condoling the death of Bengal's two foremost patriots.

The President then asked the house to elect a President. Voting commenced at 11-30, and at 12 o'clock the President declared Mr. V. J. Patel (Swarajist) as duly elected President of the Assembly to 58 votes to 56. There were three spoiled voting papers. The President said he would forward the name of the elected President to the Viceroy, in whose hand approval lay. The announcement was received with loud Swarajist cheers.

On the 24TH AUGUST Sir Frederick WHYTE opened the proceedings by reading a message from the Viceroy approving of Mr. Patel's election as President. Sir Frederick then addressed a few felicitous words of welcome to his successor, who, attired in khaddar and surmounted by a Gandhi cap occupied a seat on the floor of the Chamber.

Mr. PATEL made an acknowledgment in the same spirit voicing his grateful appreciation of Sir Frederick's work in the chair. Sir Alexander Muddiman followed with a speech on behalf of the Government members, in which he declared that this was indeed a historic occasion, since, for the first time, the Assembly had elected its own President and, amid cheers, he affirmed that their retiring President could put off his armour with the knowledge of duty well and nobly performed.

Pandit Motilal NEHRU entirely associated himself with the words of the two previous speakers and wished Sir Frederick Whyte godspeed in the way of the Swarajists.

Mr. JINNAH, in his turn, testified to Sir Frederick's courtesy and impartiality. His conduct of affairs, Mr. Jinnah asserted, would have done credit to the Parliament of any nation.

Sir D'arcy LINDSAY, on behalf of the non-official Europeans, said that through their retiring President's unfailing tact members, who at the beginning were suspicious of each other, had come to understand each other's views, and in this way many lasting friendships had been formed.

Sir Frederick WHYTE, who was obviously touched by the genuine demonstrations of appreciation that had been manifested, said he had received many kindness but the climax of generosity was found in the speeches just delivered by the leaders of all the parties in the Assembly. Interesting references to difficulties encountered and co-operation received followed, and then Sir Frederick invited the members to shake hands with him as President for the last time.

Meanwhile, Mr. Patel had withdrawn. But after a brief interval he returned in the full wig and robes of his office, and to the accompaniment of general applause he took the chair which his predecessor had vacated.

Sir ALEXANDER rose and heartily welcomed the newcomer on behalf of the Government benches. They were confident he would discharge his responsibilities well and he trusted the cordial relations which had existed between them and his predecessor would mark Mr. Patel's tenure of office. The full and loyal support of the Government benches for the Chair would always be forthcoming.

Pandit Motilal Nehru and Mr. Jinnah joined in the welcome, as also did Mr. Rangachariar and Sir Henry Stanyon. Sir Henry speaking on behalf of the non-official Europeans, delivered a little homily to the President, intimating that his political views, if not dead, had gone into hibernation, and that he was now the bond-slave of the conventions which surrounded the Chair.

Mr. PATEL listened gravely, and when the oratory had ceased, rose and delivered, with dignified mien the most remarkable speech of his career. "I have accepted this office with my eyes open, he said, "and I fully realise the implications attaching to it." He had given the question anxious thought, and he had come to the conclusion that he could serve India better by accepting the position. Swarajists had been described as destructive critics; it was their duty to show that they also knew how to construct. The Viceroy had pleaded for co-operation. His predecessor in the Chair had pleaded for co-operation. "And I also plead for co-operation," said Mr. Patel. He particularly appealed to the official members, and he was ready in the fullest sense of the term to extend co-operation to them. The Assembly listened with almost unprecedented attention. They were seeing a marvellous metamorphosis under their very eyes. Mr. Patel, the non-co-operator, developing into Mr. Patel, the stern Constitutionalist and co-operator with the Bureaucracy.

The new President's renunciation was no half-hearted affair. From that moment, he declared, he had ceased to be a party man. He belonged to no party; he belonged to all parties. Amid vociferous applause, he asked his friend, Pandit Motilal Nehru, to pass a resolution absolving him from all the obligations of a Swarajist. As for the rumours regarding his relations with the Viceroy, Mr. Patel brushed them aside. If the duties of his office required it, he would call on His Excellency ten times a day. After the conclusion of this remarkable speech the members shook hands with their new President.

On the 25TH AUGUST the Assembly held its first business meeting. About a dozen new Bills were introduced, including three based on the Civil Justice Committee's recommendations and two on the unanimous proposals of the Muddiman Committee, regarding penalising malpractices in Legislative bodies, and granting certain exemptions to members. Other Bills introduced related to insurance companies; centralisation of salt; naturalisation in British India; amendment of the Presidency and Provincial Insolvency Acts and the Religious Endowments Act, and of Sections 102 and 103 of Civil Procedure Code, as recommended by the Ranken Committee; the Age of Consent Bill, raising the age to 13 and 14 years in the case of married and unmarried girls, respectively, and a Bill amending the Limitation Act.

A Bill was introduced by Sir Charles Innes for the grading of coal and for the grant of certificates for coal intended for export, as recommended by the Noyce Committee, to enable the coal trade to rehabilitate itself in

overseas markets. The Bill was referred to a Select Committee, after Sir Charles Innes had explained that its principle, namely, the establishment of a COAL GRADING BOARD, was acceptable to the Indian Mining Association and the Mining Federation, and that the latter body had already sent in amendments to the Bill, which the Select Committee would consider. He hoped the Bill would be passed this session. A joint committee was also agreed to on the Bill relating to the CARRIAGE OF GOODS by sea.

Members of Currency Commission Attacked

Mr. JINNAH, while moving the adjournment of the Assembly to direct attention to the composition of the Commission, asserted that the Government had failed to implement their pledge that the investigating body should have adequate and effective representation of Indian interests. Mr. Jinnah used no arguments. He repeated again and again that he had no desire to make personal attacks, yet he read to the Assembly uncompromising newspaper comments on one of the Indian members. His complaint was that the Commission represented one school of thought; he maintained that the interests of India and England were in direct conflict in this matter; and he challenged the Finance Member to say whether it was not India's interests that were being sacrificed.

Mr. Jamnadas MEHTA, said that the six Europeans on the Commission, were not even known in India, and those of the members that were known, India did not accept. The Indians appointed would not be able to secure election, even to a municipal body. Mr. Ranga IYER voiced in stentorian tones: "Our duty is to boycott the Commission: to treat them as untouchables."

Sir Basil BLACKETT delivered a serious protest against the attacks that had been made. It was deplorable that because Government appointed ten men to carry out an important task, vilification of some of them was resorted to immediately. And he put it to the Assembly that a very bad impression was created when the inevitable effect of the appointment of Indians with knowledge of the subject at issue to conduct an enquiry was that they were assailed and their qualifications belittled. The Finance Member strongly affirmed that in the appointment of the Committee the interest of India as a whole had been the only consideration. It had been sought to secure impartial men of wide knowledge, accustomed to weigh evidence, who would listen to the views of all the diverse interests concerned and frame their recommendations accordingly. They would not start with pre-conceived judgments and minds already made up.

Pandit Madan Mohan MALAVIYA suggested that three new Indian members, possessing "the confidence of the Indian public," should be added to the Commission. Pandit Motilal NEHRU said that on looking into the antecedents of the members of the Commission it became evident that they had been chosen because they differed from Indian opinion. Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN in a few weighty sentences asked the Assembly to bear in mind the fact that men of great reputation and standing would not serve on Commissions relating to India if they were to be charged with a lack of impartiality, of having made up their minds beforehand. It would require the service of the very best minds the world could provide. Eventually when the vote was taken it was found that Mr. Jinnah's motion had been carried by a large majority, the figures being 64 to 45.

Registration Act Amendment

On the 26TH AUGUST the Assembly sat till late in the afternoon. Mr. Rangachariar's permissive Bill amending the Registration Act to delegate to sub-registrars power to hold enquiry into execution, etc., was referred to Select Committee by 47 votes to 43.

The Government did not oppose the motion but a number of non-officials, including Sir Henry Stanyon and Pandit Motilal Nehru did, while some other non-officials supported it. Pandit Motilal Nehru said that it was not possible to make much progress that day and suggested that another day might be allotted for the business left over.

The Home Member said it was not in his power to assign a day but he was quite agreeable to non-official business being discussed the next day after the official business was over. The President said it was not desirable that non-official business should be taken on an official day, but if the House desired it he would be agreeable.

Maternity Benefits Bill.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI moved the appointment of a select committee on his Maternity Benefits Bill. He said the Bill was circulated last session, and opinions upon it had been received. The principle underlying the Bill was that there should be prohibition of employment for a certain period during confinement, and for that period maternity benefits should be provided. The question of how much the benefit should amount to and how it should be provided were matters of detail which could be examined in the select committee. The Bill was opposed by the Burma and Punjab Government but neither of those governments were greatly affected by the maternity benefit problem. The Governments of the Central Provinces, United Provinces and Madras approved of the principle of the Bill. The Assam Government favoured the principle, but opposed the Bill on the curious ground that the present maternity benefits granted in the Assam tea gardens were more generous than those laid down in the Bill, and that the enactment of the bill might make the employers in Assam less generous.

Continuing, Mr. Joshi said he was surprised that some I. C. S. officers had opposed the Bill, forgetting that they were entitled to a free passage both ways for their families. As regarded the Bombay Government, they could not expect anything better than opposition from a Government containing two of the biggest Indian capitalist European Members who looked after the interests of European employers and a Conservative Governor. The Bombay Council had passed a resolution favouring the principle of the Bill. As regarded the details of the Bill, he would leave it to the Committee to decide whether maternity benefits be granted by employers or by contributions from the Government, and whether it should be applied to all industries or only to some.

Sir Sivaswamy IYER supported the motion, which he described as a humanitarian piece of legislation. The Bill, however, contained many defects of substance. He warned the House against the consequences of hasty and ill-considered legislation, such as might result in the non-employment of women labour.

Mr COSGRAVE said, so far as Assam was concerned, the measure was unnecessary and undesirable. Of the 5,00,000 women who would benefit

by the Bill, half the number were employed in the tea gardens. While Mr. Joshi had based some of the clauses of his Bill on the Convention of the International Labour Conference he had proceeded to evolve his own scheme, putting on the employers alone the burden of raising the maternity benefit fund. (Mr. Joshi : "No"). The Convention had, on the other hand, suggested either an insurance scheme or a contribution from public funds to the maternity benefit. Even Great Britain had not yet ratified the Convention.

Mr. Joshi : Do you mean to tell me that there are no maternity benefits in England?

Mr. Cosgrave : There are, but both employers and women contributed to it, half and half.

Sir B. N. MITRA opposed the Bill for practical reasons. He felt that Mr. Joshi had misinterpreted the general sympathy for the object of the Bill as definite support. In India education, sanitation and other nation-building objects had to be financed, and as public funds became available, they should be utilised, giving precedence to the more important work. The majority of the Provincial Governments, particularly Bengal and Bombay, were opposed to the Bill. The latter Governments pointed out that in the cotton mills women already absented themselves, generally for six weeks. Practically all the Provincial Governments had found practical difficulties in working the Bill, difficulties regarding management, disbursement and assessment. Mr. Joshi was a theorist. He had not examined the position to find out the necessity or practicability of the measure, but had brought forward a Bill simply because in some advanced countries they had such a measure. India was foremost among the countries who had rectified the majority of Washington conventions. In European countries he admitted there were maternity benefit schemes, but the Dominions had not generally have such systems. As regarded Japan, the less said the better. When Japan wanted to pursue a matter, no sentiment stood in her way. The evil proposed to be met by Mr. Joshi did not exist in India to any appreciable extent and the best way to meet it would be to foster the growth of a voluntary association for the provision of maternity benefits or better still, maternity insurance should be started to which employers, employees and the State should all contribute. Let trade unions be started and when sufficient data was available, action, if necessary, could be taken on the question of maternity benefits. The present Bill was both unnecessary and undesirable.

After Mr. Chalmers had spoken the Assembly adjourned till the next day.
Contempt of Courts Bill.

On the 27TH AUGUST the most remarkable feature of the proceedings of the Assembly was the support accorded to Government in the division lobby by Swarajists after several members of the party had delivered violent and impassioned speeches against a motion of the Home Member. After interpellations, Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN introduced several Bills of comparatively minor importance without any difficulty. These were the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Bill, the Legal Practitioners' Act Amendment and the Gurdwaras Act Supplement Bills. When he moved that the Bill relating to the punishment of contempt of courts be referred to a Select Committee the atmosphere of the Chamber underwent a change. The Bill, Sir Alexander explained, proposed to define and amend the law in regard to contempt. It

resolved any doubt that might exist as to the powers of the High Courts in regard to the protection of their subordinate courts and showed that the courts of the Judicial Commissioners had the like power of punishing contempts committed against them, or the courts below them. Further, it restricted the punishment which the courts might award for contempt to six months' imprisonment with a fine. The Home Member emphasised that, under the Bill, High Courts in India would be ensured only the same powers in this matter as were enjoyed by High Courts in England. Mr. Rangaswami IYENGAR attacked the Bill root and branch. It was objectionable. It legislated on a matter that was obsolete, it was repugnant to all. The Assembly should throw it out. The liberties of the people were in peril; if the Bill is passed then the right of Indians in freedom would be gone. Mr. ASHWORTH contended that the Bill was necessary to put an end to abuses that were too frequent. These abuses would increase as the jury system was extended, and it was absurd to say a juror would not be influenced by what he read in the newspaper. So far from being obsolete the law relating to contempt was in active operation in England, and he cited a recent notorious case where the conductors of two papers were fined in very large amounts. Mr. CHETTY and Mr. KELKAR, editor of the "Mahratta," strongly opposed the motion. Sir Henry STANYON protested weightily that it was the public duty to maintain the authority of the courts in every reasonable way. There was no doubt, he declared, that if the Bill were passed the High Courts would exercise their powers under it with a full sense of responsibility. Mr. ABHYANKAR shouted, "Let us have courts first before we talk about contempt of them." The judicial officers in India were under the control of Government and here was another attempt of the bureaucracy to curtail the liberties of the people. Sir Sivaswamy AIYER, while not supporting the details of the Bill, considered it should be sent to a committee for examination. Sir Chimanlal SETALVAD asserted that the measure was badly drafted and thought that it would have been sufficient if it had merely given power to the High Courts to deal with contempt against subordinate courts and provided that the Judicial Commissioners should have the same authority.

Pandit Motilal NEHRU, the Swarajist leader, however, struck a different note. He agreed in the main with Sir Chimanlal and intimated that if the Government were prepared to modify the Bill on the lines suggested, and to withdraw the clause which defined contempt, he would be willing to urge the Assembly to agree to refer the measure to a Select Committee.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN at once welcomed this attitude. He had explained that he was merely desirous of carrying out the principles embodied in the Bill, and he had no wish whatever to define contempt of court. But he pointed out that if he had put forward a Bill without a definition there would have been great criticism in the Assembly of the vagueness of his proposal. Sir Alexander gravely reproved the members who had been prominent in casting aspersions on the magistracy. They had, he said, done a grave injustice to a large body of their fellow-countrymen who were performing their duties honestly and justly.

On a division being called the Home Member's motion was carried amid applause by 82 votes to 8.

After the Contempt of Courts Bill had been referred to a Select Committee the House took up Mr. Joshi's Maternity Benefits Bill, the discussion of which did not conclude the day before.

The motion to refer Mr. Joshi's Bill to a Select Committee was put to the vote and lost by 51 votes to 47.

Sir Hari Singh GOUR then moved that the Bill to amend the Special Marriage Act, 1872, be referred to a Select Committee. The object of the Bill, he explained, was to remove the anomaly in the existing law which prevented marriages taking place between the ages of 18 and 21. The motion was lost without a division.

Sir Hari Singh's next motion that his Bill to declare the rights of Hindus to make settlements of property by way of trust in favour of their families, children and descendants be circulated for opinion, was also lost.

On the 31ST AUGUST the Assembly disposed of official legislative business, which included motions for the introduction of Bills amending the Opium Act and the Provident Fund Act and the second and final reading of three Bills introduced on the 25th August, namely the Naturalization Bill the Limitation Bill and amending Section 60 of the Civil Procedure Code.

The House also passed the Home Member's Bill amending Section 60 of Civil Procedure giving certain concessions to co-operative societies.

Mr. Tonkinson introduced a Bill amending the Provident Fund Act to make some formal changes necessary to administrative convenience.

Sir Basil Blackett introduced a Bill centralizing the control of the cultivation of the poppy and the manufacture of opium in the Government of India. The Department is at present administered through the agency of the Local Governments.

The Naturalisation Bill.

Sir Alexander then moved for consideration of the Naturalization Bill.

Mr. Doraiswamy IYENGAR moved that the Bill be sent to Select Committee for examination. He held that it should be so amended as to prevent a certificate of naturalization from being granted to South Africans and others who were not treating Indians justly.

Mr. ANEY took strong exception to the Bill and supported the motion for a Select Committee. He said the Bill depended upon the definition of "British subject" as given in the British Act. This definition was extremely difficult to understand. On the one hand it differentiated Indians from other British subjects and on the other, under it Indians in Indian States were not British subjects. Though the present Bill excluded American and Europeans, it did not really affect them, as they, if naturalised under the British Act, could also be naturalised in India. Moreover, the Bill did not even afford special favoured treatment to Indians in Indian States.

Mr. Ramchandra RAO drew pointed attention to a ruling of an American Court which had deprived Indians in California of their naturalisation rights. Any American or European who obtained a naturalisation certificate in England was automatically naturalised in India. The position must be safeguarded by an Act passed in India, subjecting Americans to the same difficulties as Indians were subjected to in America. He doubted, however, whether a Select Committee could find a solution.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN felt that when he brought forward the Bill he never knew it would raise a storm of this kind. Section 26 of the

British Act authorised this Legislature to enact a law on the subject. It was in exercise of that power that this Bill excluded Americans and Europeans, thereby meeting the point of view of Mr. Rao. He admitted that under the British Act Americans and Europeans could obtain naturalisation certificates. The issue raised by other speakers was different from the purpose of his Bill. It was brought forward merely to give a limited form of naturalisation to traders and a few other people who could not be naturalised under the British Act, because they did not know the English language or other language recognised on an equal footing. As to whether an American should be naturalised or not was a different matter and this Legislature had no power to modify an Act of Parliament.

The Bill had been under discussion since 1923. The Local Governments had been consulted and there had been correspondence with the Home Government on some aspects of the case. It was no use sending the Bill again to Select Committee as it had already been to Select Committee. He made it clear that he did not attach very great importance to the Bill. There was the existing law in force: only it was somewhat out of date, and the present Bill proposed some administrative improvement and to extend the limited form of naturalisation to some traders. He opposed its reference to Select Committee as the amendments proposed by the members could not be made in this Bill.

The Assembly then divided and referred the Bill to Select Committee by 59 votes to 42 votes.

Mr. Tonkinson then asked the House to take into consideration the Indian Limitation Act (Amendment) Bill.

Mr. Rama Iyengar and Mr. Rangachariar referred to a doubt which one of the clauses of the bill was open to. Consequently, on the motion of Mr. Rangachariar, the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

After some discussion the Bill amending the Religious Endowments Act, on the lines of the Ranken Committee's suggestion was passed without any amendment.

On the 1ST SEPTEMBER the Assembly had innumerable interpellations devoted largely to amenities at remote railway stations, grievances of Government servants, the merits of one State employee and the demerits of another. After this the Home Member without difficulty secured the passage of the Bill which confers certain exemptions on members of the Indian Legislatures during the actual sessions and for fourteen days before and after. Thus, when the Bill becomes law members of these bodies will be exempt from jury service and also from arrest and detention in prison under civil process.

Sikh Gurdwaras Act.

The next measure brought forward by Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN gave rise to an animated discussion. This was the Bill to supplement certain provisions of the Sikh Gurdwaras Act passed with unanimity by the Punjab Legislative Council. The measure was a simple one, its object being merely to validate the provisions of the Punjab Bill in so far as they related to the High Court at Lahore. Mr. Ujagar Singh BEDI congratulated both the Sikhs and Sir Malcolm Hailey on the settlement of the Sikh question. In the course of a long oration Pandit Madan Mohan MALAVIYA called for the release of the Sikh prisoners, whose prison doors are open to them whenever they are prepared to undertake to obey the law accepted

by their co-religionists in the Punjab Council and passed with the warm support of the two other great communities in the Province. No self-respecting Sikh, the Pandit affirmed, could give such an undertaking. He knew the men, and none would purchase his release by accepting these humiliating conditions. Continuing the Pandit extolled the services of the Sikhs to the Empire and quoted in support copious extracts from Sir Michael O'Dwyer. Mr. JINNAH contended that it was not to the interest of Government that they should insist on the conditions which Sir Malcolm Hailey had laid down. Mr. Ranga IYER told the Government that he asked for no favour for the Sikh prisoners; he demanded a right. The HOME MEMBER interposed in the debate, and pointed out that the discussion had strayed from the real issue raised in the Bill. In the speech just delivered Mr. Iyer had charged the Government with lack of imagination. Sir Alexander declared that he could not make any such charge against Mr. Iyer. And as for his remark on melancholy meanness, nothing could be less appropriate when the fine work and statesmanship shown by Sir Malcolm Hailey were remembered. The Home Member reminded the Assembly that when the terms were first announced by the Governor of the Punjab they were welcomed by the Press throughout India as fair and generous. Now, they had become "humiliating." What was there humiliating in saying you would not break the law? Finally, Sir Alexander observed that the appeal that had been made that day was a moving one and the able head of the Punjab Government would no doubt regard it in a sympathetic spirit.

The Bill was then passed amid general cheering.

Care of the Girl Wife

The Assembly next agreed to the Bill to amend the Presidency Towns Insolvency Act and the Bill to amend the Legal Practitioners Act be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinions in regard to their provisions. The latter Bill was designed to curb the activities of that particularly objectionable type of humanity, the lawyer's tout. Another measure, the Bill to amend the Code of Civil Procedure, was referred to a Select Committee. A Bill of great importance to Indian women and children was then introduced by Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN. This was the measure to amend the Penal Code by raising the age of consent from 12 to 13 in the case of a wife and to 14 in the case of a girl outside the marital relationship. The Home Member explained that he was the stepfather of the Bill; the credit for the measure must go to Sir Hari Singh Gour. The natural impulse of every Englishman, Sir Alexander affirmed, was towards progress, but as Home Member he must hold the balance, and the Bill went as far as was justified by the opinions of the Local Governments.

Mr. M. K. ACHARYA objected to penal legislation for social reform and denounced the authors of the Bill as busy bodies. Mr. CHETTY accused the Government of being slow in social reform. 'If the state of the law of a country, he said bitterly, was the index to a country's civilisation, then the position of the law in this matter was slur upon the civilisation of India.

After a long debate Sir Hari Singh GOUR, whose interest in the subject was intense, moved that the age be raised to 15 and strongly characterised a state of affairs which caused misery and death to helpless Indian women and children. But his amendment was rejected by 63 votes to 42.

Mr Rama AIYANGAR while moving a reduction of the age to 12, asked the Government seriously to consider what they were doing. Let members make an election cry of this and the electors would see that they were selling the rights and privileges of the people of this country. They were wrecking the structure of Hindu society.

The amendment proposing to reduce the age to 12 was rejected without a division and ultimately the debate was adjourned.

Transfer of Sylhet and Cachar.

On the 2ND SEPTEMBER, after interpellations, Mr. ANEY proposed to recommend that early steps should be taken to re-transfer Sylhet and Cachar to Bengal.

The HOME MEMBER said that the Government of India were still in correspondence with the Local Government on the subject and therefore Sir Alexander Muddiman suggested it would be more convenient to have the discussion next session. This suggestion was adopted.

Prohibition for India.

Mr. Mahomed YAKUB resumed the debate on the motion in favour of legislation embodying a policy of Prohibition for India. He zealously supported the proposal quoting both Scripture and the example of the United States of America. The hon. member contended that poverty and misery, which called for redress, were caused in India by the use of alcoholic liquor.

Dr. S. K. DATTA moved an amendment recommending the inclusion of drugs in a policy of Prohibition, but the reference to drugs was ruled out of order on technical grounds. Dr. Datta, accordingly, amended his amendment, which now was confined to liquors and proposed that pending the acceptance of Prohibition the sale of alcohol should be controlled by popularly elected bodies. The arguments for and against Prohibition have been worn threadbare in recent years, and the hon. member followed on the familiar lines. The extent of the drink evil in India, he urged, was shown by the increase in the revenue from drugs and drink which now amounted to nearly Rs. 20 crores a year. Imports of spirits, the most dangerous form of alcohol, were also increasing. The results of Prohibition in America were also cited, the hon. member affirming that since the policy was introduced insanity and other evils had diminished.

Sir Basil BLACKETT said that the Government of India had no desire to shirk their responsibility in this matter. Their policy was and had been to secure the maximum of revenue with the minimum of consumption, and he proceeded to show that it had been attended with results that ought to meet the approval of temperance advocates. In 40 years the consumption of country spirit had been exactly halved and to-day it amounted annually to 2'6 gallons per head of the population. Contrast this with Ceylon where the figures were 15'3 gallons per head, with England and Wales where they were 30 gallons and Scotland where they were as high as 58 gallons. Again, Sir Basil showed that there had been a very large decrease in the clearances of imported liquor since the pre-War year and he maintained that the statistics proved that the policy adopted by Government had been distinctly effective in securing a very remarkable diminution in the total quantity of liquor consumed in India.

It was true that the yield of duty, both in Customs and Excise, had shown a large increase, but that was due to the policy he had described. Here, there was a complete answer to the charge that Government, for purposes of its own, had encouraged consumption. A policy of Prohibition in the present circumstances of India was unthinkable and if the Assembly committed itself to such a policy it would commit itself to the impracticable.

The Finance Member next gave a brief account of his investigations of ancient Hindu law on the subject of liquor. It was true that the Code of Manu did prohibit its consumption by Brahmins and provided for an offender the punishment of suicide by drinking molten lead. But, generally, although virtue was to be obtained by abstinence, liquor was not prohibited. As for the United States, he said that Prohibition had led in America to widespread disrespect for the law, to corruption among officials, to manslaughter and to demoralisation of the citizens. He appealed therefore to the Assembly not to commit themselves to such a policy, even as an ultimate policy, but to allow the debate to be taken as a declaration that they desired the Government to pursue a policy of temperance. But appeals were of no avail, and in the end the Assembly, by 69 votes to 39 adopted an amendment moved by Mr. KELKAR recommending total Prohibition as the ultimate policy to be adopted by the Government, and as a first step the inauguration of a policy of a system of local option by which popularly elected bodies should control the number and location of liquor shops.

Recruitment to the I. M. S.

Dr. LOHOKARE moved that immediate steps be taken to arrange that all further recruitment to the Indian Medical Service, Indian Army medical cadre, shall henceforth be only by an open competitive examination held simultaneously in England and in India from the year 1926.

Dr. Lohokare said that though the Government had decided to retain the Indian Medical Service they had not announced their conclusions on other important details which the Lee Commission had recommended, and the Government of India had accepted the proposal to provide adequate European medical attendance to European officers. This had meant that Europeans were to be recruited, not because they were the most competent doctors, but because they were Europeans. A serious effect of the decision was that a large majority of civil posts reserved for I. M. S. officers would be filled by Europeans and there would be fewer and fewer Indian I. M. S. officers in civil employ. He would not mind if Government recruited a separate European service for European officers, but he insisted that medical officers recruited for the Army must be selected not on a racial basis but on the mere test of efficiency. Indians distrusted the Government's policy because on a flimsy pretext it gave up in 1914 recruitment to the Indian Medical Service by competitive examination and had not yet reverted to it. His experience of the selection method was that it shut the door against the best medical talent of the country. They based their recruitment on backdoor influences. How then could they get the best doctors for the Army? An open competitive examination was the only way to secure the best recruits.

Dr. Lohokare was supported by Sir Sivaswamy IYER and others who held that the proposal was modest and reasonable and did not raise the controversial issue of the organisation of the Medical Services.

Dr. DATTA accused the Government of the intention to keep Indians out of the service and was of opinion that the British Medical Association stood in India's way.

Colonel NEEDHAM said there was no particular reason to object in principle to the reintroduction of competition. Recruitment by competition was merely held in abeyance till they reached settled conditions. They must sympathise with the Service during the last 15 years. Statesmen, doctors and soldiers had sat on several Commissions on the Service, but no particular result had yet ensued till, a month ago, the very existence of the I. M. S. was in doubt. Under those circumstances it would have been impossible to have the ordinary system of recruitment. Nomination in the past was exercised with the greatest possible care, and reversion to competition was wisely postponed till the conditions of the I. M. S. were settled. The greatest stimulus to recruitment that could be given would be the settlement of the organization. He, as an I. M. S. officer, would welcome such a decision, because at present they did not know where they stood. The second part of the resolution related to a simultaneous examination, and introduced a new feature. There were insuperable practical difficulties in the way of a simultaneous examination. For instance, supposing the same paper was set in the two countries, they could not ensure the same standard in the marking of papers. The difference of a few marks would mean a great deal for the success or failure of a candidate. He was of opinion that the best policy would be to hold the examination in one place. (Mr. Shamlal Nehru : Then hold it in India). All he stood for was that entrance to the Service must be by one door, and Indian officer of the I. M. S. were with him in that view. A separate examination in India might give rise to the feeling, however unjust, that the European candidate had better qualifications, and that would impair the "esprit de corps" of the service, which had been so well maintained in the past and which he hoped would continue in the future. He could not support the proposal in the resolution that simultaneous examinations be started with effect from 1926. He believed that Indian officers should have training in England which would be of great benefit to him. The resolution was carried by 55 votes to 42.

The Age of Consent Bill.

On the 3RD SEPTEMBER the Assembly resumed the discussion of the clauses of the Age of Consent Bill.

Dr. DATTA moved that the age of consent for married girls be raised to 14 years instead of 13 as provided by the Bill. He said his amendment was for educating the community. He referred to the unhealthy growth of children in Calcutta, and the decision of Calcutta University to have compulsory military training for students. He feared compulsory military training would make no difference to a nation of unfits. The low age of marriage was responsible, and the real remedy was to raise the age of consent. He would not, however, press his amendment if the Home Member would undertake to make a thorough enquiry.

The Home Member said that he would, by executive reference, consult Local Governments and administrations on Sir Hari Singh Gour's proposals to raise the age to 15 in the case of non-marital relations.

Dr. Datta's amendment was withdrawn.

Sir Hari Singh GOUR then moved his amendment, and as he was

speaking the Home Member, interrupting, warned him that if he moved his amendment he (the Home Member) would withdraw his previous offer of circulating to Local Governments. Sir Hari Singh then withdrew his motion.

Mr. Doraiswami IYENGAR moved that the punishment of a husband should be only by fine and not by imprisonment, because the latter would cause domestic ruination. The House rejected the amendment by 64 votes to 29.

Mr. ACHARIAR pleaded that the punishment in the case of a husband be only six months' imprisonment or fine. This also was rejected by the House by 59 votes to 37.

All clauses having been passed the Home Member moved that the Bill be passed.

Mr. Rangachariar said that he did not take the orthodox view. The fact however was that though public opinion was advanced there were still communities which believed in early marriages and their early consummation. He therefore warned the Government that such communities should not be harassed as a result of the administration of this law. Personally he accepted the Bill and thought it was a wise step which the Assembly would not regret.

Mr. Rama Iyengar again appealed to the House to exclude husbands from the provisions of the Bill. Mr. Kelkar suggested that the right solution would be to make the age of consent and the age of marriage identical. Mr. Belvi and Mr. Amarnath opposed the Bill. Mr. Belvi warned the Government that the Bill would one day lead to a breach of the peace and bloodshed. Sir Alexander Muddiman made it perfectly clear that the Government took seriously the views of those members who had opposed the Bill. The Government, however, believed that it was carrying with the Bill the advanced section of the orthodox community.

The Bill was passed on a division by 84 votes to 11.

Coal-Grading Bill.

Sir Charles INNES moved for consideration of the Select Committee's report on the Coal Grading Bill, which he said had been improved by the Select Committee.

Sir Willoughby CAREY asked the Assembly to pass the Bill as soon as possible. He emphasised that a prosperous coal export trade would make a prosperous coal trade, and a prosperous coal trade meant prosperous industry in the country. He assured those who feared that the export of coal might eventually bring about a shortage of coal for internal consumption, that the existing mines could supply coal for hundreds and hundreds of years and there were a great many mines which were not yet sampled or even discovered. He referred to the difficulties, grievances of the coal trade in the past and hoped the present Bill would give encouragement to export, while there was a possibility of reopening the mines which had been closed and there would be scope for new fields. As the railways were going in for new fields the need for finding overseas markets was all the more necessary.

Mr. Jamnadas MEHTA explained that the joint minute by him and by Mr. Abhyankar was only explanatory. They wanted to show that they did not fully accept the Noyce Committee's report but found that the Bill as a whole was acceptable to them though he would have liked some improvement in one or two matters.

Sir Charles INNES gave the assurance that as soon as possible the question of protection to the coal trade would be referred to the Tariff Board and that the questions relating to long distance freight on coal for internal consumption and railway collieries were under consideration.

Sir Purshotamdas asked the Government to take a lesson from the case of the coal trade and not delay action till the industry was on its last legs.

The Bill was passed unanimously.

The Bill regarding the CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY SEA was then passed and also the Bills amending the PROVIDENT FUND ACT and the OPIUM ACT.

On the motion of Mr. Chartres the House referred to a strong and representative Select Committee the LEGISLATIVE BODIES CORRUPT PRACTICES Bill, after Pandit Motilal Nehru had declared and the Home Member had agreed that by so doing the House was committing itself only to the desirability of penalising corruption in legislative bodies and not to the procedure or definitions proposed in the Bill.

Mr. Ramachandra Rao opposed the motion and wanted circulation of the Bill. Sir Alexander gave the assurance that he would circulate it and ascertain the opinions of the Local Governments. The Select Committee would not be asked to sit the next session in Delhi.

Debate on the Reforms Committee's Report.

SIMLA — 7TH SEPTEMBER 1925.

There was an extraordinary rush of visitors when the Legislative Assembly met on the 7TH SEPTEMBER to discuss the Muddiman Committee's Report. The attendance of Members, on the other hand, did not show any marked increase.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN was cheered by all sides of the House when he rose to move the Assembly to recommend to the Governor-General-in-Council that he do accept the principle underlying the Majority Report of the Reforms Enquiry Committee and that he do give early consideration to the detailed recommendations therein contained for improvement in the machinery of Government. He said he had brought forward the resolution to fulfil a pledge of Government.

The Home Member mentioned the names of the members of the Committee to show that it was well constituted. He next refreshed the memory of the members by reading the terms of reference, which he said, on the one hand, made the enquiry into the defects inherent in the Act unlimited, but which, on the other hand, were an offer distinctly limited in scope since the Committee's remedies were to be such as not to affect the structure of the Act. He declared: "I mention this because the Committee has been much attacked for not doing what it was not authorised to do." As regards constitutional enquiries these were generally in the nature of a *post-mortem* examination, because the actors were no longer present, but in the case of his committee it was different. They examined men who had held offices or who were in office under the Reforms. He publicly acknowledged the assistance rendered to the Committee by the witnesses. Unfortunately the Committee presented two reports.

Sir A. Muddiman continued "I am moving the House to accept the Majority Report. (Cries of "No, no.") The Home Member:—I said I was only moving (laughter) that the House should accept the Minority Report. (There was considerable applause because Sir Alexander Muddiman by a slip of the tongue mentioned the word, "Minority" instead of "Majority"). Resuming he said the Majority Report had made numerous recommendations of varying degrees of importance. The Government of India could not accept all the recommendations, but accepted the principal ones. He stated: "I would tell the House that these are valuable suggestions, which all practical men should seriously consider. (Voices: 'No, no.') The machinery of the Government of India Act is not simple: it is complicated. If I can leave this country with the satisfaction of knowing that I have, in however small a degree, facilitated the working of the Act I shall be satisfied that I have done something."

Turning to the Minority Report, he said the pith of the report was at the tail end. He read out the last paragraph and emphasised that so far as practical politics was concerned the Minority wanted a Royal Commission to be appointed at once and emphasised that it wanted automatic provisions for advance. In this respect, the Home Member said, he could not do better than refer the House to the words of the Viceroy when he referred to the Minority Report and as a friend of India opined that the issue was only one of time and that if the Commission were appointed immediately it would only result in disappointment. The words from a Viceroy who had been in India for the years should naturally command attention. How much more so, when Lord Reading had just returned after an intimate touch with political world in England? Sir A. Muddiman declared: "No wiser judge of political affairs and political potentialities, I venture to think, exists in the British Empire and when, after his recent contact with the political life at Home, His Excellency gives you this advice I think the House would do well to ponder over it, not once, but many times."

Referring to the question of the appointment of a Royal Commission, the Home Member read from the Preamble of the Act and emphasised that it did not envisage automatic progress, as urged by the Minority, but laid down the lines for gradual progress. In the words of the Secretary of State, he assured the House that the British were not slaves of dates. But the door of acceleration was not open to menace. Still less would it be stormed by violence. The position therefore was that, while there must be a Statutory Commission in 1929, there might be a Royal Commission earlier. The Minority recognised that before any change took place there must be a Statutory Commission in 1929, there might be a Royal Commission earlier. The Minority recognised that before any change took place there must be a wider enquiry by a Royal Commission. He asked the House to keep in view Sub-Section 2 of Section 84 A. It laid down that the Commission should examine the working of the system of Government, the growth of education and the development of representative institutions in recommending an expansion or restriction of the present system. Sir Alexander said: "We, the Government on the one hand, and you, the non-officials, on the other hand, will be asked to show how we have worked these institutions. We will have to render an account of the stewardship in respect of the opportunities placed in our charge. Let us consider as practical men what impression will be made if that enquiry were to be held immediately." They were still in the life of the second Assembly, while the Council of State had not yet finished its first period. Then again they had only just passed a constitutional landmark, as a result of which the President of the House had been elected. (Applause). He did not wish to rake up old discords; but the fact remained that the first legislatures lacked the element which was now present.

The Home Member continued: "What opinion will the Commission form on facts and events such as these? Will it be favourable, will it be unfavourable or will it say it can form no opinion? Appeals to Cæsar are sometimes dangerous. Only those whose hearts are very clear, can stand before the judgment seat with confidence. At the most only four short years remain before that Assize must be assembled." The Home Member felt that greatly unnecessary importance had been attached to the date on which the Commission would be appointed. He declared: "What is really important to my mind is what evidence you will place before it whenever it is appointed, what answer you will give."

Mr. Jinnah: A very good answer.

The Home Member: I am glad to hear my friend say so.

Continuing the Home Member said he remembered, that some years ago, when in a country garden in the west of England, he saw a sun dial whereon were written the words "*Perant Et Imputantur*" These meant that the hours fly away, but the record remains: "Nearly six years have passed." Sir Alexander stated, "and our proceedings have been written down. Do we wish the next years to pass in the same way? Are we to remain estranged in our attempt to deal with this problem—a problem, the greatest, which had ever presented itself to the human race? You are building not a constitution for a nation, but for a continent. Can we afford to stand aside? Can we afford to remain as I sometimes feel that we are remaining, on the one hand, a party trying to storm a fortress and on the other hand, persons defending that fortress as if our lives depended upon it. Sir, this is not the way in which constitutional progress and constitutional reform can be effected. (Mr. Ranga Iyer: What is the way?) His Excellency the Viceroy has made an eloquent appeal for co-operation. Now, co-operation is not a mere phrase. Co-operation is a course of deliberate conduct."

Mr. Shanmukham Chetty: On whose part?

Sir A. Muddiman : On the part of all us.

Mr. G. P. Singh : It must be mutual.

Sir A. Muddiman : As I have said, the Secretary of State in his speech indicated that constitutional progress might be accelerated on one condition, and that, I will read to the House. He says : "There will be, there can be, no reconsideration till we see everywhere among the responsible leaders of Indian thought evidence of a sincere and genuine desire to co-operate with us in making the best of the existing constitution." That Sir, is the theme of the resolution, I put before the House. I can only regret that I do not possess the eloquence of my predecessor to move the House as that eloquence might have moved it. I am pleading, possibly in a rough and uncouth manner, a great thing. I only trust that the theme will not suffer at my hands. (Applause from all sides of the House.)

THE NON-OFFICIAL AMENDMENT

Pandit MOTILAL then rose amidst still louder applause to move his amendment. He moved :—

"This Assembly while confirming and reiterating the demand contained in the resolution passed by it on the 18th February, 1924, recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that he be pleased to take immediate steps to move His Majesty's Government to make a declaration, in Parliament, of the following fundamental changes in the present constitutional machinery and administration of India :

"(a) The revenues and all property vested in, or arising or accruing from the property or rights vested in His Majesty, under the Government of India Act, 1858, or the present Act, or received by the Secretary of State in Council under any of the said Acts, shall hereinafter vest in the Governor-General-in-Council for the purposes of the Government of India.

"(b) The Governor-General-in-Council shall be responsible to the Indian Legislature and, subject to such responsibility, shall have power to control the expenditure of the revenues of India and make such grants and appropriations of any part of those revenues, or of any other property at present under the control or disposal of the Secretary of State-for-India-in-Council, save and except the following, which shall, for a fixed term of years, remain under the control of the Secretary of State for India : (1) expenditure of the Military Services up to a fixed limit ; (2) expenditure classed as political and foreign ; (3) payments of all debts and liabilities hitherto lawfully contracted and incurred by the Secretary of State-for-India-in-Council on account of the Government of India.

"(c) The Council for the Secretary of State for India shall be abolished, and the position and functions of the Secretary of State for India shall be assimilated to those of the Secretary of State for the Self-Governing Dominions, save as otherwise provided in Clause (b) and

"(d) The Indian Army shall be nationalised within a reasonably short and definite period of time and Indians shall be admitted for Service in all arms of defence and for that purpose the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief shall be assisted by a Minister responsible to the Assembly.

"(e) The Central and Provincial Legislature shall consist entirely of members elected by constituencies formed on as wide a franchise as possible.

"(f) The principle of responsibility to the Legislature shall be introduced in all the branches of administration of the Central Government, subject to transitional reservation and residuary powers in the Governor-General in respect of the control of the military and foreign and political affairs for a fixed term of years, provided that during the said fixed term the proposals of the Governor-General-in-Council for appropriation of any revenues or moneys for military or other expenditure classed as "Defence" shall be submitted to the vote of the Legislature, but that the Governor-General-in-Council shall have power, notwithstanding the vote of the Assembly, to appropriate, up to a fixed maximum, any sum he may consider necessary for such expenditure and in the event of a war to authorise such expenditure as may be considered necessary exceeding the maximum fixed ;

"(g) The present system of Dyarchy in the Provinces shall be abolished and replaced by unitary, autonomous responsible Governments, subject to the general control and residuary powers of the Central Government in inter-provincial and all-India matters ;

"(h) The Indian Legislatures shall, after the expiry of a fixed term of years, referred to in clause (b) and (f), have full powers to make such amendments to the Constitution of India from time to time as may appear to it necessary or desirable ;

"This Assembly further recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that necessary steps be taken (a) to constitute, in consultation with the Legislative Assembly, a Convention, Round Table Conference or other suitable agency, adequately representative of all-Indian, European and Anglo-Indian interests to frame with due regard to the interests of minorities, a detailed scheme based on the above principles, after making such enquiry as may be necessary in this behalf ; (b) to replace the said scheme for approval before the Legislative Assembly and submit the same to the British Parliament, to be embodied in a Statute."

Pandit Motilal NEHRU, in a long speech, moved his amendment, which, he said, had the support of all the Nationalists and was the result of the most careful and anxious consideration by both the Independents and the Swarajists. The principle underlying the majority report was to give Indians as little as Government could and to make sure, in giving that little, that the power and prestige of the bureaucracy was not in the least jeopardised. He severely criticised Diarchy as the work of speculative constitutionalists. The demand outlined in the amendment was the very minimum which the Nation could ask. Whatever agency was appointed to make a detailed enquiry, in order to incorporate the demand, it must be adequately representative of all interest. Procrastination was the Government of India's policy and indecision was the policy of the British Cabinet. The fundamental principle of a constitution for India must be self-determination. Wise men were not slaves to dates ; yea. But wise men were not slaves to preambles either. If the principle of self-determination was not granted, Indians would not be diverted from the pursuit of what they considered their birth-right.

Indians, stated Pandit Motilal, were absolutely fit for Self-Government, as fit as the Britisher were in their country. Lord Birkenhead asked for co-operation, as the first condition to any progress. The Pandit asked for a change of heart on the part of the Government. Unless there was a change of heart and Swaraj, in the fullest sense, was guaranteed, there could be no real co-operation.

Concluding, Pandit Motilal Nehru quoted the late Mr. C. R. Das's Faridpur speech offering conditional co-operation and said that the present system of Government could not continue except by use of force.

Colonel CRAWFORD made a soldier like-speech. He believed that the ryots cared little for the nature of the Constitution. He was glad the Secretary of State had maintained the constitutional practice of consulting the House before any final decision was taken. No one expected much from the Reforms Enquiry Report, for there was no short cut to the paradise of Self-Government. He had been disappointed at the failure of the Swaraj Party to take part in the enquiry. They were constantly proclaiming India's right to self-determination as a reward for her services in the War. Many were striving genuinely to help India on the road to political progress ; but the Swarajist attitude was unsportsmanlike and unlikely to appeal to the British nation. He congratulated the members of the Committee who had signed the Minority Report ; but had the report been less partisan, it would have appealed with greater force. He could not agree that Dyarchy had failed, though the system was not popular. He admitted that the existing constitution was unpopular, but before any Commission could be appointed it was necessary to create an atmosphere of general goodwill and exercise the demon of distrust and obtain some substantial measure of agreement among all classes. The road to Swaraj was big and difficult. Their aim should be a representative, rather than a democratic form of Government. India was not a nation and a Federation of the Peoples of India was wanted. Religious, communal, national and caste differences were a portion of the problem the would always be present. Only by being good communalists could they make good nationalists. He wished to strongly support greater representation for the Depressed Classes and for Labour ; but he hoped that other representatives than lawyers would be found for them. His friends, Messrs. Joshi and Chamanlal, he felt, were often wrong in their facts and governed by western Socialist ideas.

Sir P. S. SIVASWAMY IYER said there was confusion as to which was the Majority and which was the Minority Report. But for official convention Sir Muhammad Shafi would have signed the Majority Report (here there was good laughter, because Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer like Sir Alexander Muddiman, suffer from a slip of the tongue) and the Minority Report would really have been the Majority Report. As a member of the

Minority he felt that though they had no objection to the Majority proposals generally, they felt they were inadequate and unsatisfactory and that Dyarchy could not be cured by the minor changes recommended. Officials who felt shy of Dyarchy before blessed it now because they could not go back upon the '*status quo*' and could only go forward, which they did not want to. Lord Birkenhead's speech had been aptly described by "The Morning Post" as a rigidly, pompous oration. (Laughter.) Lord Reading had told them that the verdict of a Royal Commission at present would go against them. The speaker, however thought that, if the Commission examined from the point of view, not of absence of co-operation, but as to why co-operation was not received, it would not go against them. Those who unwisely non-co-operated thought that the Government had not fulfilled its promises, but the present House showed that they had come back to co-operate. Indeed the fact that an ex-Non-Co-operator was occupying the Chair of the House was proof of their desire to co-operate. (Mr. A. Rangaswamy Iyengar : Honourable co-operation) and to utilise opportunities to do constructive work (Applause). Opportunities for responsibility made people sober and wise. (Mr. Jinnah : Hear, hear.) Could the Government say that Indians had not shown a sense of responsibility. (Hear, hear.) One other difficulty was that they were not convinced of the sincerity of the professions of the Government. (Hear, hear.) They believed that the Government did not, in its heart of hearts, mean to grant them Self-Government. (Hear, hear.) If the suspicion of the people could be removed he was confident their attitude would change. The suspicion was not without reason. The attitude of the Government towards the Indianisation of the Army was one illustration. Although a resolution, with the concurrence of the Government, was passed 4 years ago, asking for the Indianisation of the army, Lord Birkenhead had told them in effect that they must wait for 25 years and prove the success of the Reforms before asking for more. Thus they would have to wait till the Greek Calends before the Army was Indianised. Therefore distrust in the Government's intention was to a large extent justified. The theories of guardianship, mandate and trust did not deceive the people.

The speaker had never believed in indiscriminate opposition ; but he felt that unless the Government changed its attitude deadlocks might continue and distrust and suspicion on both sides would increase. He was glad to find that Pandit Motilal's amendment contained substantially the Liberal Party's resolutions and that the Swaraj Party had given up their barren path and had come to the path of construction. (Applause from the Independent.) As regards the drawing up of a Constitution they did not want to waste time if the Government was not prepared to consider it : but if the Government would, they would prepare it.

Mr. Shanmukham CHETTY said that the chief value of the Reforms Enquiry Committee was in that it showed the failure of the present Constitution. The aim of the Government of India Act was to train Indians in the craft of Self-Government. The present divided responsibility in the provinces was not only unworkable, but unheard of in history. The basic factor in diarchy was joint deliberation between the two halves of the Government. Not only had that failed, but there was also no joint responsibility between the Ministers. Faith, not reason, was the foundations of all Governments and the people had no faith in Diarchy.

Referring to the Majority Report, the speaker said that its signatories had failed to do justice to their task. They had not the moral courage to scrap Diarchy. Mr. Shanmukham Chetty quoted from Mr. Chintamani's presidential address at the last Bombay Liberal Conference, where, he said that the interests of India would have been better served if no Reforms Enquiry Committee had been appointed. Mr. Shanmukham Chetty concluded by saying that Lord Birkenhead wanted co-operation, but co-operation could be mutual only if the Government showed a change of heart.

Mr. Ranga IYER supporting Pandit Motilal's amendment, said that the unsolved communal problem was thrown in their face, as against their demand for Self-Government. Communal differences could not be settled unless they had control over the administration. The English Government was responsible for the communal differences in India, by their policy of divide and rule. They had been stimulating such differences. The history of Canada and South Africa showed that there were very acute differences of race and creed in those countries and yet England had granted them Self-Government. Those were countries without traditions and civilisations, while India had an older civilisation than England and yet the right to rule was being denied to them. He further warned that the refusal to grant them their prayer would end in a tremendous agitation and the Government should be prepared for the consequences. He concluded : "We want to be free, but we do not want to break away from you yet, and that is why we have presented you with our amendment to-day."

Dewan Bahadur T. RANGACHARIAR, supporting the amendment, hoped that his speech would not be a waste of words as his previous speeches had been. He had no doubt that the Assembly would reject the proposal of the Government. Reforms were introduced to train Indians in the art of Self-Government and not merely to appoint A, B or C as Ministers. Had the Reforms trained Indians in that art? That was the test which they should have to face as statesmen. Were the Government satisfied that the recommendations of the Majority Report would satisfy that test? He was not familiar with Dyarchy and therefore confined himself to the Central Government, which, by his co-operation, he tried to work.

Mr. Goswami : You have wasted your energy.

Mr. Rangachariar said that his views on the working of the Central Government had been fully conveyed by Sir Alfred Mond in the House of Commons. They had an elected majority in the Assembly, but there was an irresponsible Executive, which was supposed to be responsible only to some people abroad. That was hardly a satisfactory state of affairs. It was thought that the Muddiman Committee would have something to suggest on the matter. The Majority Report merely suggested stagnation and the principle of stagnation was asked to be accepted by the Assembly. Despite the Government's denials, they (the Government) were slaves to dates and to preambles. Mr. Rangachariar asked : "If the Government is not going to change the principle then why this farce of discussion and why this talk of fellowship, comradeship and friendship?"

Mr. Jinnah : To work the gas and boiler. (Laughter and applause.)

Mr. Rangachariar : If that be so, let us part company (Loud applause) and let the Government take note of the significance of the support given to this amendment by Pandit Motilal, at one end of the pole, and by my friend Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer, who is at the other end of the pole. (Laughter and applause.) I ask the Government in all seriousness to consider it carefully. You talk of difficulties ; but have they not got over the difficulties in Australia, in Canada and other countries? There is perfect unanimity in India on this constitutional question. All classes, all communities, and all sects, and sub-sects are united in demanding a change in the Constitution. It is a great sign of the times that Pandit Motilal and his Swarajist friends have joined us in formulating some of the fundamental principles with regard to the Indian Constitution, as mentioned in the amendment.

Mr. Abhyankar : Now will you join us in the mean?

Mr. Rangachariar : That is another question. We shall discuss it later. As I said before, there is the hand of fellowship given to the Government and I hope the Government will take it, so that the best brains of the country, both inside the legislatures and outside, may be devoted to useful purposes for advancing the interests of India.

Sir Charles INNES, in opposing the amendment of Pandit Motilal, said he was disappointed that it had been moved especially after the speeches made by the Secretary of State and Lord Reading. Those speeches had clearly showed that the present Constitution, whatever might be its defects, must be worked in order to achieve the end ; but the amendment of Pandit Motilal was couched in the old familiar lines and Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer to support it. It was easy to foresee the lines the debate would take and the result ; but he would not waste the time of the House by referring to the details of the amendment. It was clear that the objective of all was Responsible Government for India within the Empire. The only difference was as regards the manner. Pandit Motilal has told them that he had offered the hand of fellowship.

Pandit Motilal :—What I said was that any scheme, which is devised by us all sitting in one conference, will be the scheme in which not a single comma or full-stop can be changed. We will all be parties to it.

Sir Charles Innes :—Then I gather that the Pandit does not change in the slightest respect the opinions which he expressed in February 1924. Then I can only express surprise at Mr. Rangachariar having congratulated himself for having thought he had roped in the Swarajists. On the other hand Pandit Nehru has mildly, but firmly brought Mr. Rangachariar and Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer into the Swarajist parlour (Laughter).

Mr. Rangaswamy Iyengar :—We were all together last year.

Sir Charles Innes :—I think that the Pandit's interpretation has clarified the position. This amendment is intended to repudiate the Preamble of the Government of India Act. The responsibility for the manner and the time of each advance rests on the British Parliament, who are responsible for the welfare and advancement of the Indian people. The amendment is definitely a challenge to the British Cabinet. (Several voices :—That is right). If so then the Government must unhesitatingly oppose the amendment. That is not a position which we on the Treasury Benches can accept.

Mr. Rangaswamy Iyengar :—Because you are bound hand and foot to the British Parliament.

Sir Charles Innes :—I hope this Assembly will realise that if this amendment is passed you will be committing a grave mistake (laughter). Co-operation has been offered to you by His Majesty's Government and this amendment rejects that offer with contumely. That, I say, is a very grave mistake to make. We cannot allow the claim of the British Parliament to judge the measure and the time of each constitutional advance to diminish. They are responsible not for the intelligentsia, nor for any section of the people, but for all the peoples of India. They have a claim which they cannot give up.

Mr. Rangachariar :—Could we not ask the Parliament to give it up?

Sir Charles Innes :—You cannot; I tell you why. Over a hundred years ago almost by accident the British Government assumed responsibilities for India. A voice :—Yes, by robbing India).

Sir Charles Innes :—In these hundred years and more we gave you what you never got.

A voice :—Emasculation (laughter).

Sir Charles Innes :—We gave you peace and order and good Government. Now if this is gone, then there will be no safety and tranquility.

Sir Charles Innes said that the Government Members were in no special sense wedded to Diarchy, but Diarchy was a step on the road to Self-Government. India was now in a transitional stage. Sir Charles Innes was prepared to admit that Diarchy was unworkable; but he would not go into a debate on the point. Incomplete self-government was always unsatisfactory, but where they had not got full Responsible Self-Government? Diarchy, as a transitional experiment, must be preferred. As for the Central Government, Sir Charles Innes thought that the amendment itself proposed diarchy. (A voice : No) He was not prepared to enter into a discussion on that point. He was not anxious to raise the temperature of the debate, but he asked : "Did the House realise that in Canada, which had been quoted as having got Self-Government, there were only 16 millions, while in India there were 320 millions of people? Where is the fundamental unity, which is the basis of all democratic institutions?" That was lacking in India. So long as fundamental unity and unanimity among Indians was wanting, there would be danger in introducing Democratic Self-Government. Let Mr. Rangachariar, who had so eloquently pleaded for a change, examine his own conscience and say whether there was that fundamental unity. Moreover there was the danger of the advance being premature. In view of the fact that the Statutory Commission would come and make enquiries, the Government of India could not offer any other solution at the present time. In any enquiry India should have not only the best brains in India, but the help of His Majesty's Government. Let there be no suspicion and let there be charitableness. As one who had served in India 27 years, Sir Charles Innes said that the progress which India had made during the last four years itself was greater than was expected.

Pandit Motilal asked whether the Government had any proposal counter to the non-official amendment.

Sir Alexander Muddiman : I shall deal later.

Mr. T. C. GOSWAMI said that Sir Mahomed Shafi's explanation had shown that the officials had gone to the Committee with a bias. He recalled the personal history of Lord Birkenhead, especially in relation to Ireland, to enable the House to judge what meaning to attach to the epigram of His Lordship, that wise men were not slaves of dates. (Laughter.) Mr. Goswami considered the amendment as most modest, but he told the non-official members that they had no right to vote for it until they had proclaimed the sanction behind the amendment and until they were prepared to face the consequences, if it was not accepted by the Government. The speaker was surprised at the reasoning of the Liberal leaders, Dr. Sapru and Mr. Chintamani. In one breath they said the Constitution was unworkable and in another breath they urged that it should still be worked. He concluded that not only were the Preamble and the Constitution not acceptable to them as sacred, but even the Empire was not sacred to them. He declared : "If we cannot have Swaraj within the Empire, we shall have it outside the Empire."

Sir Purshotamdas THAKURDAS said Sir Charles Innes had more than made up for the modesty of Sir Alexander Muddiman, but the Commerce Member had only confused the issue and had tried, though unsuccessfully, to draw the red herring across the line by trying to frighten Mr. Rangachariar and Sir Sivaswami Iyer by stating that they were walking into Pandit Motilal's parlour. The Muddiman Committee consisted, with the exception of Mr. Jinnab, of officials and ex-officials and Sir Muhammad Shafi had shown that the minority was really the majority and therein lay the secret of the

Indian support to the Minority Report, wrongly so called. Why was the Government distrusted? There was the case of the Cotton Excise Duty. Despite the great popular agitation, the Government still persisted in not abolishing the duty. Then again the Tariff Board's report on Cement industry had been rejected without reference to the House. Would the Commerce Member have acted like that if he had been responsible to the House? Could the Finance Member have similarly persisted in his currency and financial policy? Then again, could the Home Member have sent Europeans, and not non-official Indians, to represent the country at the League of Nations? After a hundred years of British rule Lord Brienhead had discovered the need for agricultural development. That was because the British did not like India to advance industrially. He assured Lord Reading that, as a representative of Indian trade and commerce, he was not for forcing the Government to hasty action; but the Indian Commercial community were convinced that without a Responsible Government, they could not progress. Indeed progress would only be in the retrograde direction. He would vote with Pandit Motilal with full confidence and conviction (Applause).

Mr. Rangaswami IYENGAR said the present Government was government by a corporation, which zealously guarded the interests of the British shareholders. The position of the Secretary of State was not that of an individual, but that of a corporate body and he was not responsible to the people of India, but the Parliament. One obvious result was that if Parliament wished to use some of the Indian revenues for Imperial purposes, they could do so, so long as the Anglo-Indian corporation lasted. Vested interests would always have preference over Indian interests. That was why they wanted that the Secretary of State's absolute control over Indian Revenues should cease and his Council abolished.

The debate could not be finished and the Assembly adjourned for the next day.

SIMLA — 8TH SEPTEMBER 1925.

Next day, the 8th September, Mr. Mahomed YAKUB, supporting Pandit Motilal's amendment to the Reforms Motion, said that he represented the minority of 75 millions of Mahomedans. The Reforms of 1919 were regarded by Indian Muslims as inadequate and unsatisfactory. A thorough enquiry to overhaul the entire system was needed. Indian Muslims were not opposed to Swaraj, but, on the other hand, they were as anxious as other communities to have Self-Government in India and they were fully aware that the present Act was inadequate to lead them to Swaraj. Their demands were put forward by the All-India Muslim League. He said that Indians could never be fit for Self-Government unless they were made responsible for the administration of the country.

Mr. ABHYANKAR further supported the amendment. He said that they wanted, firstly, the power of the purse. The Governor-General-in Council should be made responsible to the Indian Legislature. Democracy and Bureaucracy could not be wedded together. Further they wanted the Army in India to be Indianised within the shortest possible time. The Council of the Secretary of State should be immediately abolished. They wanted representative legislatures on the widest possible franchise. The Commerce Member's speech did him great honour, because he had upheld the traditions of his group. He had repeated the old falsehood of the theory of trusteeship. It was no trust. It was a huge fraud, a bombastic fraud. The Commerce Member had told them that man's life and woman's honour were now safe. Was it really so? Were their homes safe? Had not the noblest among them been thrown into jails? Were not hundreds shot like dogs at Jallianwala? He quoted instances of persecution of Catholics in England. Under the Protestant regime no marriage conducted by a Catholic priest was held legal. No Catholic could buy a horse worth more than £5 (Laughter). "This was the condition in your own country when you were enjoying Self-Government," said Mr. Abhyankar, addressing the Treasury Benches. The most moderate of Moderates, men like Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer and Mr. Rangachariar, had lost faith in the British sense of justice. The Britishers responded to a sense of justice only when some other sense like the one roused by Ireland made them wide awake. The present system of Government was treason against God's law.

Mr. RAMCHANDRA RAO was surprised that after the universal condemnation of the Majority conclusions in the Indian press, the Home Member had the hardihood to ask the House to adopt his proposal. Both the Majority and the Minority had also held that nothing they could do within the terms of reference would satisfy public opinion. The Home Member had made no reference to the detailed proposals of the Majority

Report, to some of which the speaker was opposed, while others he wanted to discuss. As regards Sir Charles Innes' observation about the lack of fundamental unity, the speaker stated that similar objections had always been brought forward every time a step in advance was taken and despite the argument, progress was sanctioned. He did not therefore see why the same objection should again be brought forward. He held that the whole scheme of the Government of India Act was unsatisfactory because the Indian Revenue was not vested in the Government of India and was not administered by the Government responsible to the Legislature in India. No change, except transference of power from London to Simla, could meet the situation.

Mr. CHAMANLAL felt that the atmosphere was surcharged with unreality. The Treasury Benches pursued a policy of do nothing trusting in brute force, while the people's representatives took their stand on the righteousness of their cause. The Government wanted them to eat the humble pie and accept a one-sided bargain. It was true they had no sanction behind the resolution; but he warned that they would create one. The Swaraj Party had really accepted the Liberal Federation programme, to show that the country stood united. The only difference was that the Swarajists would go to the country and raise a storm to enforce the demands. As regards the theory of trust it had been a trust handed down to them by robbers and thieves. Every pledge had been broken. The British were sentinals of the kind who protected the treasure, only to rob it themselves.

The President twice warned the speaker that he should refrain from constantly addressing the Treasury Benches and ignoring the Chair. (Laughter.)

Sir Basil BLACKETT said that he did not share the pessimism of Sir Alfred Mond or of Mr. Rangachariar. Sir Alfred had become a pessimist after his experience of the Budget debates of the Assembly in 1924. The speaker held that the presence of Mr. Patel in the Chair was the strongest answer to the pessimists.

Mr. J. Mehta : He is there in spite of you.

Sir Basil Blackett held that even the speeches of Mr. Abhyankar and Mr. Chamanlal showed that they had learnt a great deal by co-operation. He personally believed that there had been a great deal of co-operation in the passing of the Steel Protection Act, the separation of Railway finances and the passing of the last budget and that the future historian would agree that the second Assembly co-operated as well as the first Assembly. Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar had spoken a great deal about the need for transference of the control of the purse from London to Simla. He had spoken as if the control was absolute. Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, who had proved a very valuable colleague on the Public Accounts Committee, must be aware that it was not.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar stated that the power of interference existed nevertheless.

Sir Basil held that it had not been exercised. Sir Purshotamdas had supported the resolution because Indian commerce would benefit if the Government was responsible to the Legislature. The speaker held, on the other hand, that no responsible Ministry in India could have yielded entirely to the pressure of the Bombay Merchants' Chamber and Bureau and sacrificed the interest of India as a whole, and that the exchange policy of the responsible Ministry would have been the same as that of the Government of India.

The Finance Member was not able fully to understand the amendment unless it had the virtue of being at the same time Swarajist, Independent and Moderate, and open to three interpretations to suit every party. (Laughter.) It looked incompatible even with the Minority Report. He sincerely felt that, instead of pressing the resolution in the amended form, if the non-officials admitted that what they wanted could not be done all at once and that they were willing to co-operate during the life of the present Assembly and the beginning of the next, instead of entirely rejecting the offer of co-operation from the British Government, they would have materially contributed to the discussion. The amendment of Pandit Motilal showed that its supporters stood for advance on the Western model. Provincial Autonomy was a nice phrase, but the division of the Central from the provincial sphere was very difficult. In one case it had led to a civil war and still the matter was unsolved. They might from now think of these functions, their distribution and the question of financial relations between the Central and Provincial Governments. He appealed to the non-official benches to so change their amendment or so to explain it that it did not mean rejection of the offer of the British Government and their claim to determine the manner and measure of advance. (Applause.)

Mr. JINNAH felt that the debate was not proving fertile. There was gloom and the political horizon was dark. The Government should understand why the people

non-co-operated. There was extraordinary events in the Punjab but these they had been asked to forgive and forget. The Khilafat was no longer an issue before them. The question of Swaraj was the only one that remained unsolved. In 1921 the Assembly was composed of men who came to co-operate despite the risk of odium and obloquy. That Assembly urged that a revision earlier than in 1929 was warranted. The Secretary of State's reply was that progress was possible under the Constitution, that the electorates had not been tested and that the constitutional machinery had to be tested in its working as a whole. To that the Assembly gave an answer in February 1924 by passing a resolution that the time had been to revise the Act. The Government chose to appoint the Muddiman Committee, to see whether substantial progress was possible under the structure of the Act and, if not, the question of revision was to remain a separate issue. The Muddiman Committee had reported. Col. Crawford has questioned the impartiality of the Minority, because it had stated the truth that its terms did not permit it to recommend remedial measures. He hoped that the Colonel would withdraw his statement.

Resuming Mr. Jinnah said the real issue before the House was whether the Act was to be revised earlier than 1929 or not. It had been proved that Dyarchy could not enable them to make progress within the structure of the Act. No minor amendment would satisfy any section of the politically minded people. What then was the Government's answer? He had heard speeches from the opposite benches which scandalized the people of India (Hear, hear.) They were told they were not a nation during and after the war? How was they represented on the League of Nations as a nation? Was it that India was a nation, when it suited the British, and not when it did not. (Laughter.) Even Lord Birkenhead had contradicted himself in one place. He had asked whether India was a nation and in another breath had spoken of the people of India. The speaker recognised the difficulties and asked the Government to help India to overcome them. Lord Birkenhead had done a grave injustice to India by his statement that even ten cadets for the King's Commission were not forthcoming. Mr. Jinnah declared: "That is entirely false. We will give you ten thousand." (Applause.) Lord Birkenhead had shown utter ignorance of the conditions of India and grasp of only one side of the picture. He continued: "You say there are difficulties; I recognise them. Let us meet and solve them as comrades together. What is your answer to those who are co-operating? None. What is the answer to me me, who has come to co-operate? Do you want Pandit Motilal to go down on his knees before the Viceroyal Throne and then only you will appoint a Royal Commission? What has he been doing in the Assembly? Has he not been co-operating? What other evidence do you want to produce that the responsible leaders are not offering you co-operation? Have you no eyes and no ears, have you no brains? (Loud applause from non-official benches).

Proceeding, Mr. Jinnah said that Lord Birkenhead's pomposity had claimed the present Act as a "humble" effort in human ingenuity. Yes; ingenuity indeed! (Laughter.) He had asked them to draft a constitution to solve "our problems," as if the problems were of the British people and not of the Indian people. (Laughter.) The amendment recorded fundamental changes, which they wanted to be incorporated in the Constitution. Let the Government say that such and such a proposal was wrong and he would be open to conviction.

Sir Charles Innes:—Will the Hon'ble Member explain whether he accepts what Pandit Motilal Nehru said yesterday that not a comma of this amendment must be altered?

Mr. Jinnah:—I am used to the mischievous attitude of the Hon'ble the Commerce Member. I will not be drawn into his parlour. I have known the spider too long and the fly is not going to be caught. (Loud laughter.) The Commerce Member had said that the Preamble could go to the winds.

Sir Charles Innes:—I said it can be altered, but not as you like.

Mr. Jinnah:—Supposing a Royal Commission came to the conclusion that, having regard to the growth of public opinion and educational conditions and the efficiency of the electorate, there should be an amendment of the Act on the lines proposed by Sir Charles Innes, the decision will rest with His Majesty's Government, but the Hon'ble Member does not admit it.

Mr. Jinnah, continuing, said:—Now let me come to this: Who will be the final arbiter? Who was the arbiter in the case of U. S. A.? Who was the arbiter in the case of South Africa?

Sir Charles Innes:—His Majesty's Government.

Mr. Jinnah:—Who was the arbiter in the case of Australia?

Sir Charles Innes:—His Majesty's Government.

Mr. Jinnah :—Who was the arbiter in Ireland ? The Hon'ble Members who carry on the government of India lack utter imagination (Laughter). Sir Charles Innes had no doubt carried on his work conscientiously and had done good work, according to his light (Laughter). But his 27 years' life in India was his greatest disqualification in examining the constitution. Mr. Jinnah declared : "He tells us that we have not known chaos and anarchy for a century, but Sir, we have seen the horror of being disarmed. We have seen the horror of being kept out of our own administration. We have watched the horror of helplessness. We have seen the horror of the people being kept in darkness without even elementary education and could the conditions of any civilized country after a hundred years' rule compare with this ? We want to free ourselves from these horrors. There is only one way to do it : that is to replace the irresponsible bureaucracy by a responsible democracy. We know the difficulties. We want you to help us. The Minority has proved the case for revision to the hilt. It was precluded by its terms to define Provincial Autonomy. To sum up, I want an answer. Are you prepared to appoint a Commission at once ?"

Sir Alexander Muddiman :—I will reply in detail later. I do not want to be cross-examined.

Mr. Jinnah :—Secondly, do you sincerely and honestly want us to submit to your fundamental proposals on which a Constitution can be based ? India to-day is in difficulty. I mean no menace and no threat. India is determined to win her freedom. The manner, the measure and time, either you determine in a reasonable spirit, or she will determine for herself (Loud applause).

Seth GOVINDAS, who represented the land-holders of the Central Provinces, said that the land-holders of his province had come to realise that their interests were not opposed to national interests. The speaker held that the Constitution must be framed by the people themselves and not forced upon them. He was of opinion that the Majority Report would be a stumbling block in the way of self-government. A policy of good-will would ultimately change Gandhiji into a co-operator. He appealed to the House to accept Pandit Motilal's amendment.

Mr. Duraiswami IYENGAR said that the success of the first Councils and especially of the Ministers in the first year of the Reforms, was very largely due to active Non-co-operation outside. He asked the Government what they had done to satisfy popular demand. He said the Government had bitterly failed in that. If they wanted the administration to be successful they must bring the two halves of the Government in the Provinces into closer touch with each other. Even the Majority had not thought it fit to transfer Land Revenue to the control of the Ministers. The Muddiman Committee could have achieved much if they had wanted to, but they failed to do so. Sir Alexander Muddiman had asked them to accept the principle of the Majority Report. The speaker asked if there were any principle in the Majority Report at all. The policy of the Government had been to obstruct the progress of the country. Let not Sir Alexander Muddiman go home with the idea that by rejecting the Majority proposals the Assembly was satisfied with the demands contained in the Minority proposals. They wanted something more and that was embodied in the amendment.

Dr. DATTA, while fully supporting the amendment, said that there were two types of minority communities in India, (1) the quantitative type and (2) the qualitative type. The strength of the Indian Christians in British India was 3 millions, whom the speaker represented. He held that the Christian minority was of both the qualitative and quantitative type. Referring to the question of the protection of minorities the speaker held that the present system would not be of any help. He thought the majority and the minority communities must come to a mutual agreement. The Government had failed to protect them during the last four years. It was only in the one province of Bihar and Orissa that one Indian Christian was appointed as Minister and that too by an Indian Lord Sinha. Englishmen, who were always for balance of power being maintained between the different communities, could not understand their conditions. Indian Christians were willing to co-operate with the other Indian communities, provided their co-operation was desired. Dyarchy was an experiment, very old in age. The Diwani and the Nizami of Lord Clive in Bengal was nothing but Dyarchy. He condemned Dyarchy as unworkable and supported the amendment.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN then spoke for half an hour, asking the House to realise the effect of pressing the amendment of Pandit Motilal Nehru. If that amendment was intended to be pressed from various parts of the House as their considered proposal, then he inferred that those persons had come to the conclusion that they contemplated the future constitution of India to be based entirely on Western conceptions and that they

proposed to advance on that path. The late Mr. Montagu had once told Sir Alexander that his scheme was on the lines of Western representative institutions. He (the speaker) was not prepared to say what would be the wish of the House; but he at any rate had given an opportunity to the people of India to indicate their views in that direction. If the desire of the House was to proceed on the lines of Western democratic institutions then they had cleared the ground in that respect.

The amendment of Motilal wanted a declaration from the British Government on certain points, which, with certain reservations, amounted to full Dominion Self-Government. Another point, which was made clear in the amendment, was that the present legislative bodies were not sufficient to discuss the scheme in great detail and that therefore there must be a Round Table Conference or a Convention adequately representative of Indian, European and Anglo-Indian interests.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar : We have no mandate to discuss in detail.

Sir Alexander : At any rate it is recognised that the present legislative bodies are insufficient for that task. A large and representative body is to be constituted which should examine the scheme in detail and submit it to this Assembly (not to the Indian Legislature, be it noted) and then presented to Parliament to be embodied in a statute. This means the repeal of the Government of India Act as it exists at present.

Mr. Jinnah : Amendment.

Sir Alexander : Does it not involve repeal ?

Mr. Jinnah : Certainly not.

Sir Alexander : But it does involve the virtual repeal of Section 84 (A) of the Act. I find the signatories to the Minority Report of the Muddiman Committee have changed their ground and state now that we could do without the Royal Commission, contemplated under Section 84 (A) of the Act. The demands made in the amendment are remarkable in that they ask for extraordinary changes and the eighth clause gives us an ultimatum. My friends here regard it as an offer. I would like to know whether this offer is to be accepted without alteration or revision, without changing one comma or dot or semi-colon. That is a point I would like to know. If we accept this amendment, what do we get in return ?

Several Members : Full co-operation. (Laughter).

Sir Alexander : The principle of the amendment is stated to be self-determination. How can we live our lives independent of outside people ? I have never heard any nation say so. It is admitted in the amendment that constitutional advance can only come from the English people, i.e., from Parliament. I am glad the members generally have refrained from using the language of threat ; but I have heard charges made that the English are robbers and thieves. Will these charges do any good to India ?

Mr. Rangachariar : It was rhetoric.

Sir Alexander Muddiman : It may have been rhetoric, but I deprecate the use of rhetoric. The English people are sometimes used to take these words at their proper meaning. Another member said the object of the House was to throw down the present Government. I leave it at that. I am quite willing to believe that this amendment has been put forward in perfectly good faith. (Hear, hear). But if I were of a suspicious nature, I would be inclined to see Machiavellian intention in it. But I am not a suspicious man. (Laughter and applause). My friend, Mr. Jinnah, is in great difficulty, for in the Minority Report he wanted an authoritative enquiry and now he is inclined to think that the Assembly can ask Parliament to accept these large proposals contained in the amendment without enquiry by a Royal Commission.

Mr. Jinnah : Sir, Lord Birkenhead has invited us to indicate the lines on which we desire our Constitution.

Sir Alexander Muddiman : What Lord Birkenhead was talking about was the development of a constitution, which will give more free scope to that imagination which is so characteristic a feature of India. Then, Sir, I do not find in the speeches, the word, "electorate" mentioned.

Pandit Motilal : It is the resolution.

Sir Alexander : I say it was not used in the speeches. I hope you will regard the electorate as of great importance. I mention this, because it is my business to point out the difficulties, with a view to remove them, and not to hinder progress. (Hear, hear). We must face the facts of the situation. The Committee, of which I was unfortunately the Chairman has made its observations on this point. I say the backward state of the electorate is one of the greatest difficulties you have to face in India. One member said that he returned with thanks the recommendations in the Majority Report. I ask, is it not sometimes wise for men asking for large concessions to say that humble doles are

not unworthy of consideration? With what can we support your demand for a declaration for full Dominion Self-Government?

Mr. Jinnah: "My speech." (Laughter).

Sir Alexander Muddiman: I want arguments which will be more effective. (Loud laughter). Lord Birkenhead has made it clear that acceleration in political progress is a matter of co-operation, that to refuse to work what you have got is not itself a direct claim for further progress, that the Government are not unsympathetic and he has therefore given you a generous offer. I earnestly hope that you will realise this position. I am willing to believe that this united demand from both Independents and Swarajists, made in perfectly good faith; but you will realise that in effect it is an ultimatum. The Government have been charged with doing nothing in connection with the question of Provincial Autonomy. The question of Provincial Autonomy was outside the scope of the Reforms Enquiry Committee. I don't agree that the investigation could be made by a Committee of that nature or any other Committee. The Government of India have recently availed themselves of the services of Sir Frederick Whyte, who has accepted our invitation to investigate and report to us on the relations between the Central and Local Governments in other parts of the world, with special reference to the relations that obtain between the Central and Provincial Governments in India. It is in this manner that much good work could be done on this question. The evidence he will collect may be useful and will be placed before the Royal Commission, whenever it is appointed. (Applause).

Pandit Motilal: Sir, I want to know if, at this stage, it is permissible for me to answer certain questions which Sir Alexander Muddiman asked by way of information.

Sir Alexander Muddiman: The members in the House are going to speak.

Pandit Motilal: If my friend does not want an answer, then I am satisfied.

Mr. Jammadas MEHTA felt that the kind of co-operation the Government wanted was co-operation in the continuous enslavement of India. The amendment showed that they did not want to go out of the British Empire. On the other hand they wanted to elevate the Government of India itself. Its position to-day was insignificant in the Empire, impotent abroad, and tyrannical at home. If the amendment was accepted it would make the Government for the first time the real Government of the country. The Home Member was clear-headed and sincere and he wanted to come to terms with them; but with all respect to the Home Member, he would describe the Reforms Committee as a "Muddy" Committee. (Laughter). Sir Charles Innes' speech had proved again that a bureaucrat could never be a statesman.

Mr. Venkatapathi RAJU was not heard distinctly in the press gallery. He was heard to dwell on the principle of self-determination.

In urging the Government to accept Pandit Motilal's demand, Lala DUNICHAND said that both the late Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal had held out the olive branch and Gandhiji, the leader of leaders, had preached the Gospel of Love; but the Government's attitude, on the contrary, had been most unresponsive. The amendment, he assured, did not satisfy the younger section of the Swaraj Party. The Hindu and Muslim differences would not last for ever.

Mr. ANEY said that the Majority proposals were without any principle at all and to accept them was like signing a blank cheque. The speaker thought that the Minority proposals were not given proper consideration. Judgment was pronounced against them with a preconceived and biassed mind. The position of the Government was like one who stood on the horns of a dilemma. They could neither say that Dyarchy was a complete success nor an utter failure. The Government did not acknowledge its utter failure for fear of that being made a plea for a change in the constitution. Indians were tired of using strong language in the House and the only way to solve the problem was to generously accept the amendment.

Sir Darcy LINDSAY, supporting the Majority Report, asked the House not to attack those from whom they sought favours (cries of "No favours"). It was not by heroics and beating of drums that Indians could justify their demands. Extravagant speeches were likely to do harm. It was no good alienating the Britishers. Lord Birkenhead had given a message of sympathy (cries of "certainly not"). It was in working the present constitution that progress lay. Any scheme they prepared must be put forward, after full consideration by all the parties in the country and not merely after a few hours' discussion among the members of the Assembly. Some members had demanded a change of heart on the part of the Government; but a little reciprocity in that direction might be beneficial. At present it was more of take than of give.

Pandit Motilal:—What have we taken?

Sir Darcy Lindsay :—Let there be no mistrust and suspicion. Let the Reforms be worked for what they are worth. A good deal of progress had been made under the Reforms and much more could be made if there was co-operation.

Mr. JOSHI said that the machinery was defective to protect the interests of the Indian masses and the working classes. Had His Majesty's Government discharged their trust by the people of India? The answer was certainly in the negative. The Government of India had almost failed to do their duty by the working classes. What was the history of the Indian Mines Act and the Factory Act? It was due to the pressure put upon the Government by the International Labour Conference. Perhaps the Workmen's Compensation Act was the only good feature. The future Constitution must be based on the suffrage of common people. Every adult person should have a vote. It was immoral to base any franchise on the possession of property, because thereby they gave greater value to property than to human life. The working classes should be represented by persons elected by their own organisation. There must be at least twelve such representatives, as demanded by the All-India Trade Union Congress. The principle of nomination should be given up. At present European officials were the servants of European capitalists and Indian officials were the servants of Indian capitalists.

Sir Alexander Muddiman :—Will the Hon'ble Member repeat his statement? Am I to understand from him that the servants of the Crown are servants of capitalists?

Mr. Joshi :—They are in effect so, Sir. If adult suffrage is introduced, then one section of the present triumvirate would be gone. Under Swaraj the masses will have to struggle to come into their own, but then the struggle will be more direct and easy. I support Pandit Motilal's amendment.

Mr. Amarnath DUTT, in supporting the amendment said Dyarchy should be abolished immediately and all reserved subjects should be transferred. The speaker thought the ideal question before the House was transference of power from Europeans to Indians.

Mr. NAIDU (Burma) thought that Pandit Motilal's amendment was premature and that Dyarchy had not had a fair trial. He supported the Government resolution.

Pandit Madan Mohan MALAVIYA in a long and forceful speech supported the amendment of Pt. Motilal. He gladly acknowledged the work done by British administrators, but affirmed that progress would have been fifty times more if there had been full Responsible Government. If Indians had been given a chance of working as coadjutors the progress would have been brighter and it would have been a matter of honour and satisfaction both to England and India.

Referring to the Majority Report of the Muddiman Committee, the Pandit emphasised the statement of Sir Mahomed Shafi, made after his retirement from service, in which he had asked for a Royal Commission. In the face of that statement the Majority Report became the Minority Report and the Government should withdraw what they called the Majority Report. There was peace in the Native States between Hindus and Muslims and for several thousands of years India knew peace as it did not know to-day. Pandit Malaviya joined in the appeal for a change of heart and said, whatever might be his opinion he had never for one moment stated that British Government in India should stop. "We have no desire to get away from the control of Parliament. The limitations mentioned in the amendment are in themselves a clear expression of our desire, that we are willing to submit to Parliament for sometime. How long it will be would depend on my English fellow subjects of His Majesty. Let the agreement between India and Britain be honourable and profitable to both. We want you to understand us and we wish to understand you." (Applause).

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN, in summing up the debate, asked the members to take up the attitude that would be in the best interests of India. He was still in difficulty as to what the Assembly meant by the amendment, because so many constructions had been put on it. Mr. Joshi in a rash moment had said that the servants of the Crown were the representatives of the European capitalists. Let it be remembered that the administration of India after 1858, by the servants of the Crown prevented the exploitation of the country. (Ories of "question"). Sir Mahomed Shafi was now a private individual and he was free to defend his own action in respect of the Majority Report.

The amendment of Pandit Motilal was put and carried by 14 votes against 45 votes amidst loud applause.

SIMLA—9TH SEPTEMBER 1925.

Use of Firearms.

On the 9th September, after interpellations, Mr. RANGACHARIAR moved for consideration of his Bill regulating the use of firearms in dispersing unlawful assemblies as amended by the Select Committee. He said he was a mild Brahmin from Madras, and had never been a rioter, nor was likely to be one in future. (Laughter.) He did not believe even in a threat, but still he was a human being and must take a human view of things. They could forget the Punjab wrongs but they must act in a statesman-like manner and provide against a repetition. The genesis of his Bill was a resolution moved by Mr. Sastri in March, 1921, which Sir William Vincent accepted in part. The Government accordingly brought forward a Bill but afterwards let it lapse. The speaker then tried to introduce provisions in the Bill amending the Code of Criminal Procedure, but was ruled out of order. Hence the present Bill, which had been passed by the Select Committee in an amended form and was now before the House.

As the speaker was developing his arguments, stating that Indian crowds were not armed with anything more than lathis and brickbats, the Home Member interjected: "What happened in Kohat?"

Mr. Rangachariar: Kohat is different from the rest of India.

The Home Member: The Indian law applies to Kohat.

Mr. Rangachariar replied that he was speaking of the Indian crowd as a whole. There was nothing wrong with his proposals to regulate the use of firearms. He asked the House to pass the Bill as amended by the Select Committee and not leave the law as it was.

Mr. Ranga IYER said that Britishers in India, both civil and military, held the lives of Indians very cheap. He did not wish to refer to a recent case in Simla where a rickshaw coolie was kicked to death and his ribs were broken as the case was still sub-judice.

Mr. Tonkinson: Sir, on a point of order. The hon. member cannot refer to a case still sub-judice.

The President: Order, order. The hon. member cannot refer to the case.

Mr. Ranga Iyer said he only wanted to say that Europeans held Indian lives very cheap.

Sir William BIRDWOOD, the Commander-in-Chief, read from the latest instructions relating to martial law wherein the rules provided that when a Magistrate called in military aid the officer commanding the troops was empowered to be the sole judge of the situation and act in such manner as he thought best, and that he was definitely responsible for using the minimum force. He was responsible for the safety of his command. There was no statutory obligation on him to give previous warning in all cases and he could not be prosecuted without the Government's sanction. It seemed to him that definite personal responsibility of the officer was the best possible safeguard for ensuring the proper execution of duties and that the action taken was effective and that it prevented the risk of unnecessary casualties. Under the Bill the personal responsibility of a military officer would disappear as a Magistrate alone would decide the kind of weapon to be used, and the military officer would merely act as a machine. This was risky, because officers who were experienced in the use of force knew best how much force and what weapon

to use best. Past experience in India and Egypt had shown that experienced soldiers exercised a restraining influence compared with often inexperienced, perplexed and harassed civil officials. Secondly, if a definite warning must be given invariably, then military force might not be able to save a situation of a kind where mob with torches was rushing to burn a house or factory, and troops were only a few hundred yards off and had no time to give warning. Thirdly, under Mr. Rangachariar's Bill an officer could be prosecuted without Government authority. Sir William hoped the Assembly would agree that an officer acted, not as a private individual but in the service of Crown and much against his will. It would be intolerable if such officer were to be at the caprice of any individual. He must be accorded a full measure of protection. Sir William finally held that an officer in command on the spot alone could decide the necessities of the situation and they should not tie his hands, thereby making still more arduous and complicated a situation already difficult.

Mr. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR, speaking from experience as a Magistrate, felt that the fact that a detailed report of firing had to be submitted to the Provincial or Central Secretariat was in itself a difficult enough task for Magistrates, because the Secretariat, unlike what the public thought, did not proceed with bias in favour of district officers, but were critical and thought the officer must have gone wrong. (Laughter.) Fear of the Secretariat made district officers hesitate before acting according to their best light. They could never regulate the matter by rules because they could not prevent the personality of a magistrate coming into play.

Mr. GORDON, a Bombay official, speaking as a district officer, not on behalf of all district officers, because they had not been granted communal representation yet—(laughter)—assured the House he would welcome any law which aimed at instilling a greater sense of responsibility among district officers, but the present Bill did not. The Bill was not only vague but perfectly useless. As regards the last clause, it covered persons who were shot. But what about those who might be injured by cavalry. (Laughter.) He appealed to the House not to be led away by racial feeling but to enact a law which would hold good, even under Swaraj rule.

Mr. JINNAH said that Field-Marshal Sir William Birdwood had put his case with the precision of a soldier and the logic of a lawyer. He however felt that the English precedent had been quoted unnecessarily. The revised King's Regulations, it was true, omitted the provision that a military office must not fire without the authority of a magistrate; but what was good for England up till 1920 should be good for India, why was there therefore the cry that they were introducing a revolutionary change? The speaker asked whether the Government did not think its magistrates competent to be trusted to take the best decision. They must be all experienced men.

The Home Member: If you can give me 24 hours' notice before a riot is to take place I shall see that an experienced Magistrate is sent.

Mr. Jinnah: I presume the magistracy must be competent to perform its duty. If you cannot have it better hand over the Government to some one else.

Continuing, he said Sections 131 and 132 of the Cr. P. C. already protected officers against prosecutions being launched against them without Government sanction. All that Mr. Rangachariar's Bill did was to make an exception in the case of use of firearms.

At this stage the closure was moved and accepted. Mr. Rangachariar maintained his position and felt that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar had only confirmed their view that magistrates had better judgment than policemen and soldiers.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN said the Commander-in-Chief had given the most cogent arguments that while it was a Magistrate who called in military assistance, the moment a military officer came the manner and degree of use of military force must be determined by the military officer alone. He assured Mr. Jinnah that if the House placed sufficient funds at his disposal he would place competent magistrates everywhere. As it was, in a sub-division where he was employed in his early days there were 900,000 people under his charge. He often used to be absent from his headquarters on tour far away and if any contingency arose in his absence, did they think that the honorary magistrate could take a proper decision?

The motion for second reading was carried by 56 votes to 47.

The House then discussed in detail the clauses of the Bill. Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer moved that sub-clause 4 should specifically provide that notwithstanding anything contained in Section 132 of the Cr. P. C. an officer could be prosecuted by any injured person, or his relative, without the sanction of the Government. The House accepted the amendment by a majority of 58 to 45.

Mr. Rangachariar then moved that the Bill be passed. The Home Member opposed it. The House however passed the Bill without a division and adjourned.

Protection for Paper

At the meeting of the Legislative Assembly on the 10TH SEPTEMBER Sir Charles INNES moved: "This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that assistance be given to the bamboo paper and paper pulp industry in India by the imposition, until the 31st March 1932, of a specific protective duty at the rate of one anna per pound on all printing papers (other than chrome, marble, flint, poster, and stereo) which contain less than 65 per cent. of mechanical wood pulp and on all writing papers."

Sir Charles gave the assurance that he did not want to hurry the House into accepting his proposal, but the Government felt that their proposals having been disclosed they must be put into effect, as soon as possible, to prevent a heavy import of paper before protection came into effect. He had moved his resolution first because he wanted the House to discuss the subject fully, which would not have been possible if he had brought forward his Bill only. He explained, briefly, the position of the industry and said Sir George Rainey and his colleagues perhaps thought discretion the better part of valour, and, by excluding newsprint, prevented the Press from being up against their proposals (Laughter.) But a more serious reason for excluding newsprint and other paper was that without very high protective duties cheap paper could not be excluded. The Tariff Board found that all mills manufacturing paper from sabai grass, except one at Baharanpur, had failed to prove that grass paper would be able to do without protection. Also, grass paper, though excellent for writing purposes, was not so good for printing purposes, and could meet only limited consumers. The demand for sabai grass paper did not fulfill the conditions laid down by the Fiscal Commission. Bamboo pulp paper, on the other hand, held out a prospect not only of doing away with protection and of cheap production of paper, but would meet a large demand. At present there was only one mill manufacturing from bamboo pulp, while another was to be soon started at Rajamundry. The Tariff Board suggested a specific protective duty of one anna per pound, which the Government had accepted, and he emphasised that this protection would be for specified paper in India, whether manufactured from grass or from bamboo.

But where the Board went further, said Sir Charles, was that it wanted the possibilities of cheap production of paper from bamboo to be fully explored. For this purpose it recommended that the Indian Paper Pulp Company be given either a loan of

Rs. 10 lakhs or be guaranteed a debenture to that extent to enable it to instal another machine to test the sulphite process. Similar help was to be given to the mill projected at Rajamundry to test the soda process. It was here that the Government differed from the Tariff Board.

In the case of the Indian Paper Pulp Company, said the Commerce Member, their reasons were, firstly, that this Company was not a joint stock company, but was privately owned by three or four share-holders. Its process was monopolist and by helping it the Government would be helping monopolist manufacture. Then, again, it was felt that by advancing money the Government would be placing this particular company in an advantageous position in competition with other Indian companies in the market and that such an action would be extraordinarily difficult for the Government to justify. It would be unfair. At the same time, supposing another company was floated and was anxious to try the sulphite process, it might also look to the Government to assist it in installing machines. The Government's position in such circumstances would be very difficult. The same difficulty arose with regard to the mill at Rajamundry.

The Government of India's position was very difficult, but the same was not the case with the Provincial Governments. A Provincial Government could legitimately, under the aid to Industries Act, help any industry within its territory, but for the Government of India, who had to take the part of India as a whole, to make this invidious distinction and place certain companies unfairly in a better position compared with their competitors, would have been extraordinarily difficult.

The Government of India, therefore, said Sir Charles considered an alternative and they decided that the proposed protection be granted for seven years instead of five. This, they felt, would give the two companies an advantage equivalent to the assistance proposed by the Tariff Board, and that these should be able to raise money for the purpose.

The Commerce Member admitted that the Tariff Board's proposal about a subsidy was logical, but the Government of India had to take a broader and different view of its obligations. He hoped the House would accept his resolution and enable the industry to survive. He assured them that if the conditions later on changed he would come again to the House with his proposal.

Sir Willoughby CAREY, of the Titagarh Mills, speaking on behalf of the industry, said there were at present eight mills in India which had shut down owing to the rise in exchange and chiefly because of foreign competition. The competition from Scandinavia and Germany before the War made all Indian companies lose, but during the War this was made up. After the War foreign competition had again come in and, helped by depreciated exchanges, was again underselling the Indian paper mills. He was indebted, both to the Government of India and to the Tariff Board for their proposals for protection, and, although these did not give what the industry wanted, they would accept half a loaf rather than starve, and he appealed to the House to lose no time in passing the Government's proposals on that day. He felt that the Burma Government had not given them a proper opportunity to go and establish mills there. As regards the soda process Sir Willoughby said this had already been tried by this firm, but had not proved on a large scale the success which the Tariff Board anticipated it would prove to be.

Continuing, Sir Willoughby Carey emphasised that the Tariff Board had not provided against exchange fluctuations. He hoped the Government would make a six-monthly adjustment in duty on the basis of exchange fluctuation with a view to maintaining protection at the level now proposed to be granted. He feared that the proposal might retard the growth of the paper industry from wood pulp, which was quite in abundance in India.

Mr. KELKAR moved his amendment that grass should also be specifically mentioned in the resolution giving protection to bamboo pulp. Grass and bamboo were two rival raw materials of equal value for the paper-making industry and there was no reason to ignore them. The amendment, however, was rejected by 49 votes to 40.

Mr. Rama IYENGAR moved that the Tariff Board's recommendation be accepted entirely, namely, the grant of protection for five years and assistance to the two companies to the extent of Rs. 20 lakhs under conditions imposed by the Government. Mr. Iyengar held that the Board had proposed protection because they considered that by advancing or guaranteeing Rs. 20 lakhs the Government should be able to establish the potentialities of bamboo pulp, both from the sulphite and the soda processes. This amendment too was rejected.

Mr. Naoroji DUMASIA moved that super calender paper, imported in reels, should be excluded from the protective duty as this kind of paper was not produced in India at all. Mr. B. Das and Mr. Cocke supported his amendment.

Sir Charles INNES said the Government's difficulty was that the Tariff Board considered the matter fully and did not exempt super calendar paper. He did not want a paper to be hit, but his difficulty was the Tariff Board's conclusions. He left the House to decide the matter.

The House accepted Mr. Dumasia's proposal.

Mr. Rangaswami IYENGAR moved the addition of the following rider: "This Assembly further recommends that the recommendations of the Tariff Board for the grant of a loan or subsidies to firms with a view to fully explore possibilities of the manufacture of paper from bamboo by sulphite, or soda, or other process should be accepted in principle and that further investigations be made in accordance with the recommendations of the Tariff Board as to the most effective manner in which assistance may be given to all companies or firms that are prepared to explore the possibilities on a commercial scale."

Sir Basil BLACKETT said the Assembly had already rejected Mr. Rama Iyengar's proposition which raised the same issue. He gave the assurance that the observations in the statement of objects and reasons did not pronounce a decision on the general policy of a subsidy and loan but had only rejected the grant of assistance in the manner proposed by the Tariff Board, nor was the observation in the statement of objects and reasons any censure on the policy followed by Ministers in the Transferred field. The Government had not at all considered the broad issue of subsidies and the House should not, without fully considering this issue, commit itself to any particular policy.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar's amendment was rejected by 52 votes to 36. The debate had not concluded when the House adjourned.

At the next sitting of the Assembly on the 14TH SEPTEMBER Mr. JOSHI moved that the protection, as proposed, be granted provided—(1) That the company receiving assistance shall produce a certificate from any officer appointed by the Government of India for that purpose that the labour conditions prevailing in the works of the company are satisfactory; (2) that the Government of India are given such representation on the board of directors of every company receiving the assistance as the Government of India may consider adequate; (3) that the company receiving the assistance shall undertake to pay an amount to the Government of India out of the balance which may remain of the profits after the distribution of 8 per cent. dividend to the shareholders of the company, equal to the amount which the company may have received through the rise in prices of paper due to the imposition of the protective duty.

Mr. Joshi laid stress on the fact that he was actuated by a desire to safeguard the interests of the taxpayer and the interests of labourers.

Sir Charles INNES, while admiring the pertinacity and sincerity of Mr. Joshi, opposed the amendment as laying down conditions which could not in practice be worked. By appointing officers they would be merely appointing spies, whose presence would disturb the relations between employers and employed.

Mr. Devaki Prasad SINHA thought there was nothing revolutionary in the amendment, which only attempted to concede to the tax-payers what was due to them.

The amendment was lost by 58 votes to 37. The resolution was carried.

Sir Charles INNES then moved for leave to introduce the Bill providing for the fostering and development of the bamboo paper industry in British India. In the statement of objects and reasons it was stated that the Government accepted the Tariff Board's proposal to impose a protective duty of one anna per pound on printing paper and writing paper as specified in the schedule. The Government, however, considered that as the grant of loans or subsidies in the manner suggested by the Board was open to grave objections, the period for which protection should be granted should be seven years instead of five years, as proposed. Sir Charles Innes did not make a speech in introducing the Bill.

Mr. CHAMAN LAL opposed the introduction of the Bill. He said that the Tariff Board in their report had laid down that these paper mills did not fulfil the conditions laid down by the Fiscal Commission. The industry was not an infant one and, moreover most of the mills were European-owned.

Despite opposition, the Bill was then introduced. In asking the Assembly to take the Bill into consideration, Sir Charles INNES said it was nothing but a corollary to the resolution passed a few minutes before.

Mr. CHAMAN LAL opposed consideration of the Bill. The paper industry, he said, had made tremendous profits during the War. The trouble in the industry was due to mismanagement and bad technical knowledge. Most of the mills were either European or European-managed.

Sir Charles INNES, in moving that the Bill be passed, referred to Mr. Dumasia's amendment that the protective duty be not imposed on super calendered paper imported in reels and said that this matter would be considered by the Government in consultation with the Advisory Committee attached to the Department of Commerce, and if it was found that protection should not be given to it, then the Government would bring forward an amendment during the next session. If the decision was for a protective duty then they would report to the Assembly. He made this announcement after consulting the members opposite, especially because he had received telegrams from Allahabad and Madras saying that if this amendment for exclusion from the protective duty was made to super-calendered paper it would place some papers in an unfair position in their competition with the "Times of India Illustrated Weekly."

Mr. M. K. ACHARYA regretted that the Government had accepted the suggestion that they should give financial help to such industries as required it. It was a pity that none of the Rs. 21 lakhs that the Government would get by protective duties by practically taxing education would be used to give financial assistance to any struggling company.

Sir Hari Singh GOUR contended that the industry as a whole should get protection and not merely the bamboo paper industry.

Sir Basil BLACKETT maintained that the Bill was framed in accordance with the Tariff Board's recommendations. It did not commit the Government to give protection to the paper industry in general, but only to the bamboo paper industry. The Government would not be justified in making a grant, or a loan, or a subsidy to any particular paper mill. The Rs. 21 lakhs which Mr. Acharya expected would come to the Government revenue might be used in relieving provincial contributions, and to that extent there might be a stimulus given to education. The Bill was then passed.

Criminal Procedure Code.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN then moved that the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1923, be taken into consideration. The Home Member said that since the passing of the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Act certain difficulties had been brought to light by the Local Governments and judicial authorities. The provisions of the Bill were to remedy those defects, which were all of a minor character and there was no substance in them. The House was well aware what Section 109 was. Prior to the amendment of 1923 the effect of section 109 of the Code was that courts had discretion to award either simple or rigorous imprisonment in case of proceedings being taken against anyone. The effect of the amendment of 1923 was to take away that discretion and award only simple imprisonment. The present Bill attempted to restore it. The speaker said several Local Governments had represented that most of the persons against whom proceedings were taken under Section 109 were men for whom simple imprisonment was quite unsuitable. Concluding, Sir Alexander wished that either the House would pass the Bill as proposed, or would reject it.

The House rejected the amendment of Mr. Amarnath DUTT, that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee which the Home Member had opposed.

Mr. RANGACHARIAR objected to Clause 2 by which the Govt. wanted to restore the powers to send to rigorous imprisonment persons who were unable to find security because of possessing no ostensible means of livelihood. It was improper that any civilised government should rigorously confine persons simply because they had no ostensible means of livelihood. Only two years ago this Assembly removed the discretion from the magistrates to send persons to rigorous imprisonment and no necessity had been shown for the restoration of the discretion.

Sir Hari Singh Gour supported Mr. Rangaiahariar in opposing the clause. Mr. Tonkinson pointed out that the power to send a person to rigorous imprisonment would be used only at the discretion of the Magistrate and not necessarily at all times. Sir Henry Stanyon supported the Bill. Mr. Venkatapati Raju and Mr. Belvi opposed the removal of the discretion.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN asked whether the Assembly was going to turn down every measure intended to support law and order. If so, let it say so. The change in the law removing discretion was made without consulting Local Governments, and now not only all Local Governments but jail officers and executive officers were unanimous that discretion must be restored. If the Assembly was not going to give discretion to the Magistrates then it was far better to remove Section 109 itself from the Code. There was no political flavour about the proposed change. It was moved solely with a desire to defend the hearths and homes of the people. Let the Assembly consider this point carefully.

Clause 2 of the Bill was then pressed and lost by 52 votes to 51. Sir Alexander Muddiman did not move for the passage of the Bill as amended.

The Assembly next considered and passed the Bill further to amend the INDIAN LIMITATION ACT, as reported by the Select Committee, and the Bill to amend the law relating to TESTAMENTARY SUCCESSION as passed by the Council of State.

✓ Bounty for Steel Industry.

On the 15TH SEPTEMBER, the Assembly re-assembling, Sir Charles INNES moved his resolution asking the House to agree to the grant of a maximum of Rs. 60 lakhs bounty to the steel industry up to the 31st March, 1927, of which Rs. 18½ lakhs are to be paid up to the 31st March, 1926. His resolution, he said, proposed further assistance till March, 1927, when the Steel Protection Act expired and after which the whole question would be reconsidered. Sir Charles confessed that the recommendations of the Tariff Board came to the Government with a shock. Of course, the Tariff Board was logical in its views, but it did not take into account several considerations which the Government must take. He recalled that when the Government granted a bounty of Rs. 50 lakhs the Government were more generous than the proposal of the Tariff Board. He claimed that they had succeeded in extricating the industry from a serious position, and the Chairman of the Tata Iron and Steel Company had admitted it.

There was a considerable increase in consumption and large stocks of the Company had been cleared up. The policy of Protection had proved effective and as it continued to become effective there was bound to be a fall in the receipts under Customs. He assured the House that a modification of the Board's proposal did not in the least mean that the Government had weakened in its policy of protecting the steel industry.

Sir Charles reminded the House that the bounties were a very much more generous form of assistance than an increase in duties. His reasons for modification of the Board's proposals were, firstly, that the Board's estimate of receipts was only an estimate, and that in any case a margin of Rs. 24 lakhs was too small, considering other commitments, as they could not be too generous to one firm at the expense of other legitimate claimants upon them. But the most important reason was one which the Tariff Board could not take into account, namely, that bounties were rather a demoralising form

of assistance and made a firm rely too much upon the Government and too little upon its own efforts. He admitted he was treading delicate ground, but he recalled that he made an appeal to the Tata Company in May, 1924, and repeated it last January in asking the Company to co-operate with the Government and the Legislature. He hoped the Chairman of the Tata Company would bear him out when he said there had been hitherto no response to that appeal, and it was this feature which worried the speaker most.

The House must remember that two-thirds of the capital of this Company was in the form of second preference shares, the interest on which was cumulative. For the past three years about Rs. 50 lakhs of interest had been accumulated, and there was a load of debt amounting to over Rs. 1½ crores. The House must send a message to the Tata Iron and Steel Company that it expected the Company to take the matter in hand and fully co-operate in putting the industry on a sound and healthy basis. They had placed a heavy burden upon the country. The Tariff Board estimated that burden at about Rs. 1½ crores. In addition to that they had paid to this one Company Rs. 2,03 lakhs during the life of the Act. He thought they had been very generous to the Company. His proposal was to last the life of the Steel Protection Act.

Sir Purushotamdas THAKURDAS challenged the Government openly to state its view, and suggested that the whole matter of the company's affairs be referred to a committee of the House.

Sir Basil BLACKETT said the Government and the House were anxious that the Indian steel industry should be built up. They were prepared to allow a reasonable return on capital actually engaged in the production of steel, but the tax-payer could not be expected to pay for interest on second preference shares which had accumulated.

Sir Charles Innes's resolution was carried.

Railway Account and Audit

There was a heated discussion over Mr. Sim's proposal to separate audit from accounts on the East Indian Railway as an experimental measure. Mr. SIM said his proposal was sequel to the separation of railway accounts. It would make the spending authorities responsible for the accounts, and they would have an independent audit which they never had before.

Mr. KELKAR'S motion for the adjournment of the discussion to the Delhi session was supported by Mr. Neogy and Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, but was rejected by 59 votes to 38 and Mr. Sim's resolution was finally passed by 67 votes to 14, after the acceptance of amendments specifically bringing the accounts staff under the control of the Financial Commissioner, and providing that difference of opinions between the accounts officer and the Agent be reported to the Standing Finance Committee on Railways.

All supplementary demands were granted except the one moved by Sir Basil Blackett under Stamps, which was rejected last March and was again rejected on this day, the majority being of opinion that it should be charged to capital and not to revenue. The Oudh Courts Supplementary Bill was also passed.

Disqualification of Electors.

On the 16TH SEPTEMBER the Assembly discussed two non-official resolutions and carried them both in the face of Government opposition. The

first resolution was moved by Pandit Shamlal NEHRU and was carried by a majority of one vote after the acceptance of an amendment by Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar. The resolution in its amended form urged the removal of all restrictions against persons who had undergone imprisonment for criminal offences from standing as candidates for election to the Legislatures. Pandit Shamlal said that if the Government really wanted co-operation, it should remove the bar. Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar urged the removal of the restrictions which at present fettered the right of constituencies to elect their representatives. He wanted India to have the same practice as England.

Prince Akram Hussain, Colonel Crawford and several other members opposed the resolution, while several speakers supported the motion.

The Home Member said he was perfectly ready to see all those who were anxious to co-operate by constitutional methods come into the Legislature. Most countries had disqualifying provisions, indeed the conviction of a person for breaking the law was *prima facie* evidence that he was not a desirable person, but he admitted that there were special conditions existing at present, and assured the House that the Government, by altering the rules raising the limit to one year, and allowing the Local Governments to use their discretion, had done all it reasonably could to meet the wishes of the House. He, personally, would have preferred some automatic provision rather than the discretionary powers of Local Governments, but it was impossible to do that and to define the offences involving moral turpitude.

Suspension of Cotton Excise duty.

The second resolution discussed was moved by Sir Purshotamdas THAKURDAS who suggested suspending the collection of the Cotton Excise Duty for the rest of the financial year. He said the fact that prevention was better than cure, that the condition of the industry was very critical and that over 30,000 millhands were now out of employment, should make the Govt. realise the gravity of the situation and assist the industry. If assistance was not given, it would only prove that the only way they could obtain relief was from a national government. As regarded the financial aspect of the question, he believed that the Government had more than adequately strengthened their finances, but the will to use them to abolish the excise duty was wanting.

Sir Basil BLACKET, on behalf of the Government, explained the attitude of the Government and advised the Assembly to have the debate adjourned. Suspension of the duty, he said, was equivalent to abolition of the duty. It would be difficult to re-impose the duty in April if it was suspended now. It was not practical politics. There was a large staff employed at a cost of Rs. 70,000 to Rs. 80,000 on collection of the duty. What were they to do when the duty was suspended? If the duty were suspended it would mean a loss of Rs. 80 to Rs. 90 lakhs and the millowners, when once the duty was suspended, would produce so much and stop producing after April. Thereby there would be a loss of Rs. 50 lakhs in the Budget for next year. The Government could not find money in the present year's Budget to suspend the collection of the duty in the middle of the financial year. Moreover, if there was a surplus there might be demands for remission of Provincial Contributions and such other demands. Neither the Government nor the Assembly could conceivably, however serious their financial situation might be, short of a real calamity, re-impose this duty next April if it was suspended now. If the Assembly wanted a subsidy for the cotton mill industry then let it say so, but not bring in this indirect and round-about manner a motion

for the virtual abolition of the cotton excise duty. If the Assembly passed the resolution the Government would treat it as a strongly expressed desire of the House for consideration of the question of the abolition of the duty if financial considerations permitted at the time of the next Budget.

Mr. Kasturbhai LALBHAI, supporting the resolution, said the time had passed when lip sympathy could alleviate the situation. Unless something was done now a grave situation would arise which would be beyond remedy. As to the question of referring the matter to the Tariff Board, he said the matter was fully considered by the Fiscal Commission. Suggestions like these were intended to postpone help.

Sir Charles INNES pointed out that the analogy of protection given to the steel industry did not apply because it was only for one firm, whereas the cotton mill industry contained no less than 150 mills all over India. He doubted very much if the suspension of the cotton excise duty would touch the fringe of the real problem facing the cotton mills. It was not practical politics to re-impose the duty in April when once it was suspended. The Commerce Member asked why the millowners shirked an enquiry of the whole position by the Tariff Board. He suspected the millowners had not a strong case to make out.

Sir PURSHOTAMDAS replied that he wanted not a favour but justice and their birthright on behalf of the textile industry of India. When the millowners were not anxious for an enquiry why were the Government anxious for an enquiry? The attitude of the Government of India clearly showed that the textile industry could not expect relief. It was no use appealing to Madras and the Punjab benches and hinting that if the duty was suspended there would be no remission in Provincial Contributions. But he assured the Finance Member that next March the Assembly would extract from the Finance Member abolition of the cotton excise duty.

Sir Basil Blackett said he had referred to an enquiry by the Tariff Board because it was the Millowners' Association which had suggested the imposition of a higher import duty on yarn and cloth below 30 counts on grounds of protection.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas's resolution was put and carried by 57 votes to 32.

On the 17TH SEPTEMBER, the last day of the session, the Assembly, though faced with an official agenda of considerable length, was not in a mood to discuss controversial issues. Accordingly, the discussion of the Home Member's resolution regarding the Standing Committees on Hindu and Mahomedan law, as recommended by the Muddiman Committee, and the consideration of the Trade Union Bill, as amended by the Select Committee, were adjourned to the Delhi session.

Sir Bhupendranath Mitra and Mr. Chartres opposed the adjournment motion as they considered it to be of a dilatory character.

Mr. Joshi, Mr. D. P. Sinha and Mr. Chaman Lal considered the time too short and the attendance too small to consider such an important question.

The House passed the Home Member's resolution accepting the Muddiman Committee's recommendation in respect of female franchise, and also accepted the Commerce Member's resolution proposing an amendment of the Steel Protection Act so as to empower the Government to pay by way of bounties on wagons a sum not exceeding Rs. 21 lakhs during the three

financial years commencing the 1st April, 1924, instead of a sum not exceeding Rs. 7 lakhs in each of these financial years.

Trade Taxation Bill.

Sir Basil Blackett next introduced the Trading Taxation Bill. One of the resolutions of the Imperial Economic Conference, 1923, was to the effect that the several Parliaments of Great Britain, the Dominions, and India should be invited to enact at the earliest opportunity a declaration that the general and particular provisions of its Acts or Ordinances imposing taxation shall be deemed to apply to any commercial or industrial enterprise carried on by or on behalf of any other such Governments, in the same manner in all respects as if it were carried on by or on behalf of a subject of the British Crown. This resolution has been accepted by the Government of India, and the present Bill has been drawn up in order to give effect to it. The Bill follows, with suitable modifications, the wording of Section 25 of the British Finance Act, 1925.

The House disposed of formal business by agreeing to amendments made by the Council of State in the Age of Consent Bill and the Coal Grading Bill, and also passed the following Bill as passed by the Council of State:—Criminal Tribes Bill, Cotton Transport Bill, Madras, Bengal and Bombay Children's Act Supplementary Bill, Ports Bill, and the Repealing Bill.

Sir B. N. Mitra introduced a Bill amending the Factories Act to carry out administrative improvements. The House agreed to circulate the Bill.

The Finance Member moved for the grant of Rs. 17 lakhs for capital outlay on the Security Printing Press now charged to capital according to the Assembly's wishes. He made it clear that charging to capital this particular expenditure should in no way be taken to infringe the right of the Government to follow the policy which had so far been in practice. The House accepted the motion.

The Assembly adjourned sine die.

The Council of State

DELHI—22ND JANUARY 1925

The Council of State held the first sitting of the winter session on the 22nd January at Metcalfe House, Delhi. There was a fairly large attendance of members. Sir Henry Moncrieff-Smith, the new President, occupied the chair.

Sir Narasimha SARMA, leader of the House, accorded a cordial welcome to Sir Henry Moncrieff-Smith with whom he had been associated for a number of years, both as a non-official and as an official. A series of speeches followed from all sections of the House endorsing the Law Member's observations.

Mr. SETHNA then moved a resolution expressing "profound sorrow at the sad and premature death of Mr. Montagu, who as Under-Secretary and later as Secretary of State had rendered very valuable and distinguished service to India.

Mr. SETHNA next moved that the Government of India should urge upon the British Government that effect be given to the recommendation of the Lytton Committee that the existing bar upon the admission of Indian students to the University Officers' Training Corps (in England) should be removed. Lord Rawlinson, on behalf of the Government, accepted the resolution which was carried.

The Provident Fund Bill

On the 27TH JANUARY an interesting discussion took place on a formal motion moved by Mr. CRERAR (Home Secretary) asking for the concurrence of the Council to the alterations made by the Legislative Assembly in September last in the Bill passed by the Council of State relating to the Government and other Provident Funds.

When the Bill was passed in the Council in September last there was a provision which enabled the employer to deduct from the amount payable to the employee certain sums of money. It was laid down that in the case of contributory provident funds, that is, in cases of funds in which both the employer and the employee contributed, the employer "can deduct (a) any amount due under a liability incurred by him (employer) but not exceeding the total amount of the employer's contributions credited to the account of the employee and of any interest or increment which has accrued on such contributions, and (b) where the employee has been dismissed from employment, or where he resigns service within five years of employment, the whole or any part of the amount of any such contributions (paid by employer), interest or increment."

When the Bill went down to the Legislative Assembly the non-officials deleted the second clause, that is, the clause which enables the employer to forfeit the provident fund contribution of the employer in the case of dismissal or resignation of the employee before five years' service. The main objection advanced by non-officials in the Assembly against this provision was that it would be unjust on the part of an employer to give the employee a double punishment, not only of dismissal (sometimes without sufficient reasons) but also of forfeiture of the amount earned for work. It was further pointed out by non-officials in the Assembly that labourers were sometimes dismissed because of their joining labour unions. The Assembly, for these reasons, deleted the second clause.

Mr. CHADWICK (Secretary in Department of Commerce and Railways), in a spirited speech, urged the restoration of this clause, without which, he said, a good Bill would become a bad law. Contributory provident funds were largely started by railway administrations in the interests of their employees but for obscure reasons the Assembly rejected the sound provision in the original Bill. Employees were dismissed only after a good case had been found against them. No one, he contended, was dismissed arbitrarily by a railway administration and if any one was dismissed arbitrarily the remedy must be found, not through a Bill of this description, but by other means. Last year eight railways disbursed Rs. 82 and one-fourth lakhs to their employees and only Rs. 25,000 was withheld on account of dismissal and misconduct, like theft and interference with women passengers.

The Council adopted Mr. Chadwick's amendment amid a few dissentient voices and thereby restored the provision in the original Bill.

Encouragement of Indian Art

On the 28TH JANUARY the Council of State discussed Mr. Haroon Jaffer's resolution asking for the immediate appointment of a committee to formulate a scheme of scholarships and prizes for Indian art students engaged in painting, sculpture, architecture and artistic crafts. The mover said his resolution was really nothing but a translation into practical form of suggestions made by Sir George Lloyd who did so much for Indian Art in connection with the Bombay School of Art. Sir George Lloyd has suggested that the Central Government should establish a "Prize of Delhi" and that students qualifying in sculpture and painting, and perhaps in architecture and artistic crafts, as winner of the Prize should be admitted to a central institution, a kind of Villa Medici, there to reap the fullest advantages of a period of three or four years' painting and modelling.

Mr. SETHNA moved an amendment as an addition to the resolution, suggesting that a central institution be opened where scholarship-holders and prize-men may continue their work for a period of three or four years.

Mr. A. B. LEY (Industries Department Secretary) said that the attitude of the Government was one of extreme sympathy with the proposals but the Government could not accept the resolution as it stood. The amendment completely altered the aspect of the original resolution and the Government could not commit itself one way or the other on this question with such short notice.

After further discussion the resolution and the amendment were boiled down to the proposition that the Government should consider the advisability of formulating a scheme of scholarships and prizes for Indian art students engaged in painting, sculpture, architecture and artistic crafts and to establish a central institution where scholarship-holders and prizemen may continue their work for a period of three or four years. This proposition was accepted by the Government and carried unanimously.

Proper Currency Act Amendment.

On the 5TH FEBRUARY the Council of State, passed without amendment two Bills which came up from the Legislative Assembly. The first was the Bill to amend the Paper Currency Act, 1923, in order to raise the permissible limit of investment in the Currency Reserve from Rs. 85 crores to Rs. 100 crores, so that additional currency might be provided with a view to prevent excessive momentary stringency during any busy trade season. Mr. McWATERS (Finance Secretary), who moved for consideration of the Bill, traversed mainly the arguments that had been advanced by Sir Basil Blackett in the Assembly. He emphasised that the Bill was beneficial, necessary and a safe measure, intended to deal with the increase in trade that was expected as a result of four consecutive good monsoons. He added that he recognised that ideas of currency reform were in the air, but the fundamental questions of this reform could not be rushed, and, as His Excellency the Viceroy pointed out in his opening speech. If world conditions continued to improve as they had been improving for some time past then the time was not far distant when an authoritative committee would be appointed to recommend the lines of currency reform. The Bill was taken into consideration and passed.

Workmen's Breach of Contract.

On the motion of Mr. CRERAR, the Council took into consideration the Bill to repeal certain enactments whereby breaches of contract by labourers are punishable under the Criminal Law. Mr. Crerar emphasised that the Bill was brought forward in fulfilment of the pledge given by the Government to the Assembly on two motions and with the approval of the Secretary of State. This Bill too was taken into consideration and passed.

Natal Boroughs Ordinance.

On the 11TH FEBRUARY the Council of State re-assembled to dispose of two non-official resolutions. The first resolution was in the name of Mr. SETHNA urging the expediency of taking steps to secure the annulment of the Natal Boroughs Ordinance to which assent had been given by the Governor-General of South Africa. Mr. Sethna did not move the resolution and in withdrawing it he more or less repeated the explanation given by Sir Devaprasad Sarbadhikari a few days ago. Mr. Sethna, who was himself a member of the deputation to the Viceroy said he returned quite convinced that the Government of India were in right earnest and he felt confident that the Viceroy and his Government would leave no stone unturned till they brought about an honourable settlement of this vexed question.

Military Training for Indians.

Raja Sir Rampal SINGH then moved his resolution recommending to the Government (a) to raise the strength of the University Training Corps so as to meet the demands of the Universities of the different Provinces for giving military training to such of their students as are physically fit, and, (b) to extend to members of the University Training Corps the same privileges as are being enjoyed by members of the Auxiliary Force.

In moving his resolution Raja Sir Rampal Singh said the various enactments passed from time to time for the formation of volunteer corps did not debar Indians from admission into those corps but in practice only very few Indians got admission. This uncalled for obstruction by executive orders on racial considerations was strongly felt by Indians. There were no avenues for Indians of education, status and position to get military training of any kind. Only enrolment in the cavalry and infantry branches of the service and non-commissioned and commissioned ranks of the second order were open to a certain class and that too on inadequate pay and with no status. The Esher Committee had laid stress on the importance of encouraging University Corps and even the Provincial Governments were not averse to their development. The Universities had become conscious of their duties towards their students as regards military training. In the United Provinces the Allahabad, Benares and Aligarh Universities had expressed their readiness to introduce compulsory training. It would be unstatesmanlike on the part of the Government not to encourage and foster the very legitimate aspirations of young educated Indians for the defence of their country. The Government was pledged to carry out a scheme of second line defence and there should be no half-heartedness in carrying it out. It was an admitted fact that the University Training Corps did not enjoy the same privileges, rights and concessions as did the Auxiliary Force. He therefore appealed to the Government to accept his recommendations.

His Excellency Lord RAWLINSON said he found himself in agreement with some of the remarks of Raja Sir Rampal Singh. All the points which he had raised formed some of the subjects gone into by the Auxiliary and Territorial Force Committee, presided over by Sir John Shea, and a prominent member of which was Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer. This Committee had signed an unanimous report about a fortnight ago which would be published on the 24th February. Concluding, he said; "I cannot tell you what the report contains and what the Government is going to do. I should like to accept the resolution but I cannot do it now. I am reluctant at the same time to oppose it, knowing as I do that the desires of Raja Sir Rampal Singh and his supporters are met to a very large extent by the proposals of the Committee. I therefore would appeal to you to have the discussion postponed till after the report is published.

Eventually the discussion was postponed till a fortnight after publication of the Report.

On the 16TH FEBRUARY Mr. YAMIN KHAN moved for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Interest Act, in order to provide that no creditor, whether of a secured or unsecured loan, shall be entitled to recover by suit interest exceeding the principal amount originally lent or due at the date of suit, whichever is less, and that this provision shall not apply to usufructuary mortgages.

Mr. Crerar, Home Secretary opposed the introduction of the Bill.

The motion for leave to introduce the Bill was lost, 21 voting against it and 16 for it.

Ganges Water Enquiry

Sir Devaprasad SARBADHIKARI moved for the appointment of a Committee of members of both the Council of State and the Assembly and of officials to examine and report on the question of the supply of Ganges water at and below Narora and to advise as to the necessary quantity of unobstructed water that should be allowed to escape at Narora in order to meet fully the requirements of the situation created by the pilgrim traffic. Sir Devaprasad detailed the various stages of the controversy and emphasised the importance of an early solution from the Hindu point of view. The importance of this question was admitted by Lord Hardinge and reiterated by Lord Meston while he was Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces. The subject was in the hands of the Government of India as the Ganges passed through three Provinces.

Mr. LEY, Industries Secretary, opposed the resolution. He pointed out that the United Provinces Government had fully considered the genuine grievances of the Hindu community and appointed a committee, which reported that a certain greater percentage of water should be allowed for the use of pilgrims. A large portion of the cultivating population and some public bodies resident near Narora protested against this decision, which to them meant loss of Rs. 12 lakhs, but the United Provinces Government despite the loss, agreed to the conclusions of the committee in order to satisfy Hindu

feeling. The Government of India did not propose to interfere with that decision because they were in complete agreement with it.

The resolution was put and declared carried, the Government not claiming a division.

Soldiers' Litigation Bill

On the 17TH FEBRUARY, Mr. CRERAR moved the consideration of the Indian Soldiers' Litigation Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly a few days ago. After explaining the changes accepted by the Assembly in the Soldiers' Litigation Act the Home Secretary pointed out that the general purpose was to remove defects and doubts contained in the measure and to bring it into conformity with the Limitation Act.

The Council without discussion agreed changes. This acceptance will now be intimated to the Assembly, and the Bill will be taken as passed because the Bill was originally passed in this Council and sent down to the Assembly, where a select committee was appointed which recommended the changes now approved by both the Houses.

On the motion of Mr. CHADWICK (Commerce Secretary) the Council agreed to the introduction of the Bill to amend the Ports Act of 1908 regulating the bunkering of vessels with liquid fuel within port limits.

Khan Bahadur Ebrahim Haroon JAFFER then moved a resolution recommending full investigation at an early date into the mineral resources of Chota Nagpur and urging the advisability of establishing in that district a school or institute of mining.

Mr. LEY (Industries Secretary) assured the Council that the Director of Geological Survey had in his mind the completion of survey in Chota Nagpur district. There was therefore no special investigation necessary at this stage.

In view of Mr. Ley's speech Mr. Karandikar suggested an amendment to the resolution, which was supported by Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoy that the first portion of the resolution relating to investigation be dropped. The second portion about establishing a school was carried unanimously.

On the 23RD FEBRUARY Khan Bahadur Ebrahim Haroon JAFFER moved that the Provincial Governments be asked to investigate the best means of dealing quickly and adequately with mental defectives, particularly of a minor and curable kind.

Sir Devaprasad Sarbadhikari and Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoy gave wholehearted support to the resolution.

Mr. Crerar, on behalf of the Government of India, undertook to communicate to Local Governments, the proceedings on this resolution, with a strong note of sympathy.

Khan Bahadur Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer thanked members for their support of the resolution, and, in view of the Government's assurance and undertaking to circulate the report of the debate, he withdrew the resolution.

Criminal Law Amendment Repeal Bill.

Mr. KARANDIKAR then moved for the consideration of the Bill passed by the Assembly in September last at the instance of Sir Hari Singh Gour, repealing Part II of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. It will be remembered that Part I of this Act was repealed in pursuance of the report of the Repressive Laws Committee. An attempt was made by Lala Girdharilal Agarwala in the first Assembly to get the second part also repealed, but it failed. Sir Hari Singh Gour induced the Assembly to pass this repealing Bill in the last Simla session.

Mr. Karandikar said that under this Act the Government could declare any association unlawful and there was no provision enabling the association to appeal and get justice. The Act was passed in the old Imperial Legislative Council in 1908, when Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoy had urged that the operation of the Act should be for a stated period. Sir Rash Behari Ghose had urged that it was for the Government to show that a certain association was unlawful. After 1911 for some time no instance occurred in which the Act was made applicable. From 1914 to 1918 the Defec of India Act was put into force. Then came the Reforms, which it was thought would be heralded under favourable conditions. The Repressive Laws Committee recommended the repeal of this Act, but while the first part of it was repealed the second was allowed to remain on the statute book. It was a slur on the administration of justice and the Council of State must support the Assembly's action. The Repressive Laws Committee had recommended that it might be possible for the Government to undertake the necessary legislation to repeal this Act during the Delhi session of 1922. Its repeal must be expedited with the change in the political situation. There might be instances here and there requiring the use of this law, but the country as a whole was quiet and should not be stigmatised by the continuance of this enactment.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN, who was present to take part in the debate on behalf of Government opposed the motion. Mr. Karandikar, he said, had referred to the early history of this enactment, but he did not mention the fact that the old Assembly in July, 1923, rejected a similar motion of Lala Girdharial Agarwala. If the Government could not maintain peace by the ordinary law then it must maintain it by special laws. No Government could afford to adopt a policy of drift and allow the situation to grow into proportions that would require the application of martial law. The Act to which Mr. Karandikar objected was meant to be used only against those associations which encouraged acts of violence or intimidation, and whose existence constituted a danger to the public peace. No one could object to such a law. Although a Local Government might in some cases go wrong, the situation in India rendered it necessary to retain a measure of this kind on the statute book. One of the most striking proofs of this was found in the fact that within four days of the Assembly's action in passing Sir Hari Singh Gour's repealing Bill, a situation arose in Burma in connection with a boycott movement necessitating the application of this measure.

Moreover, as the Repressive Laws Committee itself reported, there was definite evidence of certain organisations encouraging acts of violence and intimidation and in 1922 it was found necessary in Delhi to declare certain associations of volunteers unlawful, as they had resorted to violence and intimidation and obstructed the funeral of a citizen. The Committee regretted that they could not at that juncture agree to the repeal of Part II of the Act. It might be argued by some that since then the position had improved, but everyone knew the situation in Bengal and was conversant with the grisly record of crimes in that province, where matters had come to a head. Moreover there was a dangerous revolutionary conspiracy in India and there was a real danger to India from abroad of Bolsheviks spreading seditious literature, poisoning the minds of peaceful, and lawabiding citizens. The situation in Burma and in the Punjab was such that the Government could not possibly agree to the repeal of this Act. If this Act was repealed then these unlawful associations would usurp the powers of the Government and prevent peaceful citizens from pursuing their lawful avocations. At a time when the Government were dealing with such difficult situations they required the support of the Council, but this Bill was against the interests of law and order and the Council of State should reject it.

Mr. KHAPARDE moved the reference of the Bill to Select Committee, with a view to incorporate in the existing law a provision so that the application of that law might be justified before the Standing Advisory Committee after a certain period of time. Such a provision would not only enable the Government to apply the law on all necessary occasions but would not only enable the people to feel sure that it was being rightly applied. This amendment was put and lost.

A number of members approved the motion but Mr. Karandikar said he maintained his attitude because he was convinced that the mistake of 1908 must now be rectified. He would not take the discredit of withdrawing the Bill but would press the motion to a vote, because it was time that their House should declare itself on the question, after the Assembly had passed the Bill.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN emphasised that if this Bill was pressed and passed then the Governor-General must veto it. This was not a mere resolution recommending repeal of the law but it was legislation and he hoped the Council would reject the measure as advised by Sir Dinsha Wacha, one who had promoted liberal ideals in this country for a long period.

The motion for consideration of the Bill was put and lost, six voting for and 26 voting against it.

General Discussion of the Budget

On the 24TH FEBRUARY the Council of State devoted to the general discussion of the Railway budget. Sir Charles Innes was present in the Council to "exercise the right of reply to the debate".

Mr. BELL, Bengal Chamber of Commerce, was the first to initiate the discussion. He welcomed separation of the Railway finance from general finance as of great advantage in that it would enable railways to be run as a commercial proposition. He wanted to know the detailed information on the reduction of four crores in the value of stores which was said to have increased the capital expenditure to that extent. This appeared to be an unusual term and further explanation must be forthcoming for the huge figure.

Mr. Bell approved of the increased expenditure in the coming year on rolling stocks and marshalling yards and quoted the evidence tendered before the Coal Committee in

support of the necessity for extension and remodelling of yards, if the railways were to be run to the convenience of the public. But he regretted that the necessity for remodelling the marshalling yards in Behar and Orissa had not been considered in this connection. At the same time he was glad that the Railway Board had dealt generously with regard to doubling of lines on E. I. Railway and with regard to expansion and improvement of Railway workshops in several parts of India, because no system of transport could be run without great wastage of tonnage, unless it had sufficient well-equipped workshops in which repairs could be economically carried out in the quickest possible time.

Sir Maneckjee DADABHOY took the Government severely to task for not consulting the Council of State on the admittedly historic step involving what Sir Charles Innes had described in the Assembly as an important change in policy.

"I recognise" said Sir Maneckji "the privileges and financial obligations of the Legislative Assembly. If the matter lay exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Assembly, I for one, would never take any objection to it, but it is the duty of everyone to see that the privileges of the Council of State are in no way restricted or affected. Here was an important change of policy involving special contribution from Railways to the general exchequer, but this Council was not even given the principle of that change. I look upon all members and the President to see that the rights and privileges of this supreme legislative body are never curtailed."

Proceeding, he considered the scheme of separation as possessing distinct advantages; but he deprecated the departure of the policy in regard to the terms for construction of branch lines, because it would take away a useful form of public investment in Railway projects and the present construction of smaller lines and created a sense of disappointment among a certain class of public, who had hitherto regarded these branch lines as safe and sound investment.

Proceeding, Sir Maneckji approved of the standardisation of locomotives and the Indianisation scheme. He recognised that Indianisation was slow, but he did not object to it, because efficiency must also be maintained. He appreciated the difficulties of the Government in this matter, and recognised that Anglo-Indians should not be overlooked. But he urged that no obstacle should be placed in the way of efficient Indians being promoted. Concluding, Sir Maneckji said he considered the budget as a whole as one which held out hope for future development and expressed gratitude to Sir Charles Innes and Mr. Hindley for their industry and exertion in this matter.

Mr. Lallubhai SAMALDAS also gave his general approval of the Railway budget, but he joined Sir Maneckji Dadabhai in the protest to the Government for their not having consulted the Council in the matter of separation of Railway Finance. If the Government were going to treat them like this throughout, then some of the present members of this Council would not care to come in through the next election. Let the Government take note of this feeling of this Council and treat this House with greater consideration. He objected to the Government taking from the Railways more than 1 per cent of their profits and quoted the analogy of the guarantors, known as shroffs in the Banking world, because if the Railways were to be run on commercial lines, then there must be something kept in the Reserve for bad or lean years. He approved of the starting of a training school at Chandausi as a right step in the right direction, but complained that the rate of Indianisation was not satisfactory. He asked the Government to consider the fact that the money left after spending on renewals and repairs and replacements from the depreciation fund would earn interest, and therefore the period of writing off the plant should be lessened. Concluding Mr. Lallubhai urged that there must be co-operation between Railways and Hydro-Electric Companies in the matter of electrification of Railways in the suburbs.

Lala RAM SARAN DAS complained that no Indian has been appointed on the Railway Board and asked: Was not Rai Bahadur Ralla Ram, Retired Chief Engineer of Railways, who was considered by the Government as an able man, a fit person on the Railway Board? He bitterly complained of the lack of convenience like waiting sheds and raised platforms for third class passengers and proceeding urged that the system of reservation of compartments for particular communities should be abolished. He welcomed the decision to revert to new constructions on a large scale, but pleaded for strengthening of the Travelling Police as a safeguard against the increase of crime on Railways. He deprecated the feeling on the part of the Government that members of the Legislature should not pry into the details of the Railway administration and said that the Government must welcome all healthy criticism given with the intention of remedying defects. He considered that Indianisation had not been proceeded with on some Railways as expected, and pointed out that on the North-West Railway especially it had been practically

at a standstill. As regards the amount of 26 lakhs meant for giving Lee Commission's concessions to the officers on Company Railways, Mr. Ram Saran Das objected to colour bar being introduced in regard to the emoluments to the services, and wanted to know why the State should pay for the officers of Company's Railways. Concluding he thought that if the new terms for the construction of the branch lines did not work well, then there must be a reconsideration of the question.

Sir Deva Prasad SARVADHIKARI complimented the Railway member and the Chief Commissioner on their admirable work in regard to the separation of Railway finance, but contested the argument that the legislature should not dictate in matters of details of Railway administration.

Sir Deva Prasad also joined Sir Maneckjee in the protest that the Government had not consulted the Council in the matter of separation, and incidentally asked why not a word had been mentioned in this Council about the publication of the Reforms Enquiry Committee report, while an announcement on this had been made by the Government in the other House? This kind of ignoring on the part of the Government was not fair to this House which had supported the Government (Laughter). He endorsed the other observations of his non-official friends as regards Indianisation and grievances of third class passengers, as also the new terms for construction of feeder lines.

Concluding Sir Deva Prasad referred to the Howrah Bridge and said that Calcutta's trouble was lack of money. Even if the Bengal Government was not wide awake in this matter, as had been alleged, the Railway Board might come in and construct a Railway Bridge between Howrah and Sealdah.

Mr. HINDLEY, Chief Commissioner of Railways, thanked the Council for the appreciative references to the work of the Railway Board in connection with the separation of Railway finance from general finance. Referring to the remarks of Mr. Bell, Mr. Hindley said that the Government would make every endeavour to spend the 30 crores set apart for rehabilitation of Railways. The improvements had already commenced and would be pushed through as speedily as possible. Regarding the complaint that provision had not been made for construction of yards in Bihar and Orissa collieries, Mr. Hindley referred to the statistics to prove that during the last eight years they had spent altogether nine crores of rupees in improving the facilities in coal fields and very large improvements had been made in marketing yards. Loading of coal during the last few years had been higher than at any time in the history of coal trade and this fact showed that Government had not neglected the matter. Regarding the plea for more powers to be given to Agents and Managers, Mr. Hindley said that decentralisation was the key-note of the work of the Railway Board and their relations with the Agents and Managers but in the present transition period there might be cases which a man in the street might regard as unnecessary interference, but the Agents and other representatives of Railways who were present at the last Railway Conference in Simla never made any complain on the score of interference even when they were asked to express their grievances.

Referring to Howrah Bridge Mr. Hindley said Calcutta ought not to be halting between two opinions on the question but must take a decision and construct the bridge which would cost six crores which was not a large sum when compared to several crores spent by the Bombay Government in connection with the development schemes. The Government of India was doing its best to offer to Calcutta its assistance but they could not give financial help to construction of Howrah bridge. As regards open wagons for carriage of coal, the Government of India would wait for the report of the Coal Committee before taking any definite decision. The Railway Board was now examining into the possibility of revising a certain of their workshop services on a temporary basis in order to construct coaching stock and provide for greater number of lower class stock and if this was done they would be able to go ahead with their programme. Coupes were being provided not only in upper classes stock but also in third class stock.

The school at Chaddani would be to train the subordinate staff on Railways, primarily with the object of improving their efficiency and give them opportunities of understanding their work, which was of a technical character. They would have classes for young officers who would be instructed in all the aspects of train working and transportation working. In addition, probationary traffic officers would be trained at the school and they would get practical training on the Railways as well.

There was no justification for abandoning the present main station of Delhi because a new city was being erected at Raisina. The main station would carry on traffic for many years but as and when traffic in Raisina increased, they would provide new facilities to meet them. They were not providing for those facilities at present in Raisina because there was no need for them now. Facilities would grow with the volume of

passengers' traffic. In any case there was no justification for abandoning the present main station of Delhi.

Sir Charles INNES replying to the debate said there was no idea on the part of the Government of showing any disrespect to or casting alar upon the Council of State by not placing before them the resolution regarding the separation of Railway finance. In matters of this kind which affected both business and financial interests this Council was in a better position to advise the Government than the Legislative Assembly. If the Government did not consult the Council it was because they thought they had got the approval of the Council to the principle of the scheme when they had obtained from four members of this Council who were on the Central Advisory Council their approval to it. Moreover in the budget debate last year several speakers including Sir Maneckjee had supported the principle of the separation of the Railway budget. If the actual details of the scheme had been brought only to the Legislative Assembly it was because that House was the body which had power to sanction expenditure. There was however no intention on the part of the Government to show disrespect to this body. (Applause). Referring to the criticisms about the new policy in regard to branch lines, the Railway Member said the terms were out of date and nobody would come forward with money for financing of these lines on those terms. They had therefore to revise the rules in the direction of greater liberality.

Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoj had said that a time might come when Government might not find it possible to raise money for these lines. If that time ever came then the Government of India would be prepared to consider the matter. The new policy was best suited under the circumstances of moment and they could review it from time to time in the light of experiences they would gain. Records of Railway Board were full of applications from local Governments asking for construction of branch lines. The new terms were that if any local Government found it difficult to raise money for the construction of a line which though not remunerative yet was required for administrative reasons then the Government of India would certainly construct the line provided the local Government was prepared to guarantee the interest on their money. This was a simple, business-like proposition and local Governments had given their approval to it and there were several applications for construction under these terms.

Regarding arguments for decentralisation, Mr. Hindley had given full reply, but he (Sir Charles Innes) added that Government did not deprecate healthy criticism of the legislature but did certainly mind questions and resolutions likely to injure the discipline and proper working of Railways. If the legislature took up individual cases like alleged supersessions and dismissals etc., then certainly they would paralyse the initiative and efficiency of Railway administration. He was glad to hear from Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoj about Indianisation that efficiency must be their watchword. That was what Government was trying to do and it would follow that policy while giving effect to the Lee Commission's recommendations for 75 per cent. Indians in Railway services.

Reduction of third class fare had been urged but reduction of even half a pie would mean a loss of four and a half crores. It would be no use making reduction unless they were able to carry increased traffic.

Concluding Sir Charles Innes said:—"I have no fears for the future of Indian Railways if only the Central Legislature adheres to its propositions and trust the Railway Board and the Government. Then I am confident that as the time comes, Railways will become more and more efficient instrument for trade and commerce." (Applause).

After the speech of Sir Charles the general discussion of the Railway Budget came to an end.

On the 25TH FEBRUARY Mr. Ebrahim Haroon JAFFER moved the first resolution recommending that Local Governments should be directed to include a representative of the travelling public elected by recognised Passenger Associations in the Railway Advisory Committees in provincial headquarters. Mr. Jaffer, in a short speech, reviewed the activities of the Railway Passengers' Protection Society of India which, by representations to the Government of India, brought the local Advisory Committees into existence, and said the demand he now made for the representation of Passengers' Associations was only a necessary corollary. If representatives of Passengers' Associations were appointed, the local Advisory Committee would become more useful.

Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, who was formerly president of the Bombay Advisory Committee, supported the resolution.

Mr. Natesan, a member of the Madras Committee, pointed out that on that Committee there was already a representative of the Passengers' Association, whose suggestions were carefully attended to.

Mr. Chadwick, Commerce Secretary, opposed the resolution as being unnecessary.

A great deal of latitude, he said, was given at present to the local Committees, which had come into existence only 18 months ago. The Government of India should not so soon tie them as regarded the selection of members. Mr. Haroon Jaffer pressed his resolution, which was rejected.

Haji Chowdhry Mahomed ISMAIL withdrew his resolution for the reduction of Third and Inter-Class fares on the railways to their pre-War level, in view of the general discussion on the Railway Budget the day before.

Mr. Haroon JAFFER then moved for the appointment of an expert committee to consider the advisability of reshaping many of India's most important waterways in order to provide heavy water transport to her innermost doors, security of the land against erosion, reclamation of land and tidal power for electric schemes.

Mr. Ley, Industries Secretary, opposed the resolution which was rejected.

On the 26TH FEBRUARY the Council of State turned down a non-official Bill passed by the Assembly in the teeth of Government opposition. Sir D. P. SARBADHIKARI sponsored Mr. Neogy's Bill to do away with the reservation of Railway compartments for Europeans and Anglo-Indians. He was supported by Mr. Khaparde, while opposed by Sir Maneckjee Dadabhai and Mr. Ismail Chaudhuri.

Mr. CHADWICK declared that the present law was flexible to suit altering conditions. The proposed change would only impose undue restrictions on Railway companies regarding arrangements for the convenience of passengers. The Bill was rejected.

The Council next passed the Assembly President's Salary Bill.

On the 28TH FEBRUARY before Mr. McWATTERS presented the General Budget in the Council of State the President announced the result of the elections held for the panels of members to sit on various Standing Advisory Committee attached to various departments.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1925-26.

Mr. McWATTERS then delivered his Budget speech, which lasted 40 minutes. The announcements of the surplus, of the remission of Provincial contributions to Madras, the United Provinces, the Punjab and Burma, and that Bengal would get a further remission of contribution to the extent of Rs. 63 lakhs for the next three years were received with cheers. Mr. Bell and the Raja of Digapathia applauded the statement that the import duty on petrol had been reduced to 4 as, a gallon and Mr. Raza Ali and other members showed their appreciation when it was declared that the Islamia College, Peshawar, was among other institutions to receive financial aid. Concluding the Financial Secretary observed :—"We hope the corner has been turned and that we are actually advancing on the road to social progress. Local Governments will now have an opportunity to develop industry, agriculture, education and sanitation and such other services as will lead to enlightenment." (Cheers).

The speech of Mr. McWatters contained numerous figures without any reference to notes and was delivered with such ease and clearness that officials and non-officials joined in warmly congratulating him.

Recruitment to Public Services.

On the 2ND MARCH, after interpellations, Syed RAZA Ali moved that early steps be taken to modify the existing system of recruitment for public services on the following lines :—

(a) A just and adequate share in public services whether recruited by competition or selection should be fixed for the Muslim community.

(b) In case of services recruited by competition particularly, the Indian Civil and Police Services, two lists of successful candidates, one for Non-Muslim candidates and the other for Muslim candidates, should be prepared and from each list as many candidates as there may be vacancies available for the men on that list, should be chosen in the order of merit, and

(c) A minimum standard of qualification should be prescribed and no candidate who fails to satisfy such standard should be selected for appointment.

Mr. Raza Ali said he would not have brought this resolution but for the conviction that it would enable to remove much of unpleasantness that existed between the two communities. This resolution, if passed, would remove the apprehensions of the Mahomedan community as to its future in a self-governing India. It was the duty of non-Muslims to support this resolution and satisfy the Muslims, just as it was the duty of Muslims to assure their Hindu friends that in their relation with their co-religionists in foreign countries, they would place the interests of India first and communal considera-

tions next, Mr. Raza Ali then reviewed the history of the Muslim demand. When Lord Minto was Viceroy an influential deputation consisting of representative Muslims in India represented their grievances and separate representation was created in the Minto-Morley Reforms. This set Mussalman fears at rest for some time. Had it not been for the Lucknow Pact of 1916, Mussalmans would not have helped to bring the Reforms Scheme into existence. The principle of this pact was separate representation in legislative bodies. But as regards services, the first commission appointed was in 1886 and the question which he (Mr. Raza Ali) raised even then for the commission stated that by open competition they would be only excluding some important classes of India and give undue benefit to other communities, especially the Hindus who had an earlier start in University education. The same question figured again in the deliberations of the Islington commission which also made similar observations as regards the effect of unrestricted competitive examination. But unfortunately the conditions which existed in 1912 obtained even to-day. Since the examination for recruitment for the I.C.S. had been held in India, not a single Mahomedan had been appointed. This was the result of the operation of the competitive principle. He at the same time admitted that the position was not so bad in the Imperial Police Service where Government had exercised their power of nomination more liberally. Unless they fixed a certain standard for Muslims that community would go unrepresented in the services. Fortunately, this principle was in force in the United Provinces. Dr. Paranjpye in his presidential address at the last Lucknow session of the Liberal Federation endorsed the introduction of certain minimum percentage in order to see that backward communities did not suffer in competition. The Legislative Assembly had discussed this question several times. On one occasion Sir Malcolm Hailey, in accepting a resolution in an amended form declared that the Government would see to prevent preponderance of any one class or community in the services under the direct control of the Government of India and there would be no overweighing of one province or community. Not only the Government but also public men in India stood committed to adequate representation of minority interests. The position in the Imperial Services was far from satisfactory and efforts must be made to redress the grievances of Muslims.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN on behalf of the Government made an important announcement and at the same time expressed inability to accept the resolution. He admitted this was the most important subject, because, whatever their Government might be in future, the services which were the hands of the Government must be efficient and nothing could be done to impair them. When he referred to the services, he referred to both Europeans and Indians, who had set an admirable example of integrity and public spirit. Now that the Lee Commission's recommendations had been accepted, it was natural that there should be anxiety in some quarters about the effect of the changes. The Government of India, in giving effect to their policy, remark that the Indian element in all grades and branches of administration must rely primarily on their measures for recruitment. What was offered to the new recruit, whether Indian, European or whatever race, was a career open to talent and once admitted to public services, his fortunes lay in his own hands. He must not rely for advancement on favour or favouritism, but on his own industry, energy and capacity. Promotion must go by merit and selection for posts requiring special qualifications must be determined by strict regard for the necessary qualifications and general public interest. As regards the existing members in the services, Sir Alexander Muddiman made it clear that Indianisation would not be by the door of supersession.

Proceeding, the Home Member said it was clear that the Government should not rush to make changes in the system of recruitment; but there was no doubt that the standard of efficiency must be maintained. That was the principle from which they could not depart. Sir Malcolm Hailey had made it clear in the Assembly in the debate on a similar resolution that in making new recruitment in the services under the control of the Government of India, steps would be taken to secure that the services were not unduly over-weighted with representatives of anyone community or province, and as far as possible, the claims of the communities would be considered. In the competitive examination held in Allahabad in 1923 and 1924, 45 Indian candidates were successful, but there was no Mahomedan. But the Government exercised their power of nomination and out of eight candidates appointed under the process three were Mahomedans. In the Police service also out of 27 candidates successful in the competitive examination in 1922 and 1923 eight were Mahomedans; but under nomination two Mahomedans were taken. The results of the examination did call for reflection. The position at present was summed up in the absolutely unexceptionable formula accepted by the Assembly although it was negatively worked; but the trouble lay in applying that formula and he did not see how

they could prevent over-weighting of one community as the decision was in the hands of those who applied for admission; but there must be a general list and not a separate list, and what was more important than the test of examination was the test of character.

Continuing Sir Alexander said:—"I admit there is need for adequate representation of the minority communities; but we cannot impair efficiency of the services by admitting persons not qualified. We do contemplate extension of the present arrangement to secure representation of the minority interests provided there is adequate qualification. At present, we reserve one-third of the vacancies in the I.C.S. which will be filled by direct recruitment in India. To redress inequalities we propose in future to reserve one-third of the whole of Indian recruitment. We shall, as in the past, normally appoint officers by observing the results of competitive examinations. If the results are satisfactory, we shall be in no difficulty. If not, we shall resort to the process of nomination. We shall nominate as far as possible to those vacancies candidates who sat for the competitive examination and attained the adequate standard. If there are no such candidates we may have to adopt other means of obtaining them. If we cannot obtain candidates with adequate qualification we shall not appoint them. Regarding the other three All-India services (Police, Engineering and Forest), we shall similarly reserve one-third of the total vacancies (Applause). Concluding the Home Member pointed out that the statement he had made must go far towards meeting the wishes of Mr. Raza Ali and advised him to withdraw the resolution.

On the 3RD MARCH the Council of State passed without discussion the Cantonments Act Amendment Bill as passed by the Assembly.

On the motion of Mr. Orerar the House agreed to a small verbal alteration in the Bill to amend the Prisons Act as passed by the Assembly.

The Council agreed to the changes made by the Assembly to the Obscene Publications Bill. Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoj maintained that the changes made by the Assembly were superfluous but it had become the fashion of the Assembly not to accept any Bill passed by this House without some change or other. He did not, however, like to oppose these unnecessary changes because that would necessitate a joint session of both the House.

Restriction of Opium to Medical Consumption.

On the 4TH MARCH, in the Council of State, Sir Devaprasad SARBADHIKARI moved that early steps be taken to see that as far as possible only medicinal use of opium should be countenanced in India and that the Government should confer with representatives of all sections of the people as to how restriction to medicinal use could be carried out in practice.

The mover said that this question had assumed an acute form as a result of the Geneva Conference. He did not wish to challenge the whole of the opium policy of the Government but to deal with the restriction of actual consumption as far as possible to medical needs. Mr. Campbell, India's representative at the Geneva Conference, made a reservation when he said that the Government of India could not consent to restrict the cultivation of opium to medical and scientific requirements because in India the drug could not be thus restricted without great hardship. It was this statement to which he (Sir Devaprasad) objected because it was precisely what was contained in Lord Hardinge's despatch of 1911 and which had now become the *locus classicus* of the Government of India on the subject. In that despatch it was stated: "Non-medical uses are so interwoven with medical uses that it is not possible to draw a distinction between them. It is not necessary that the growth of the poppy and the manufacture and sale of opium should be prohibited except for medical purposes. Whatever may be the case in other countries, centuries of experience have taught the people of India discretion in the use of the drug and its misuse is a negligible feature in Indian life."

Mr. McWATERS, on behalf of the Government opposed the resolution as being unnecessary and detailed the steps which the Government were taking in the direction desired. Speaking on the external aspect of the question, Mr. McWaters pointed out that the Government had by the agreement of 1911 prohibited the export of opium to China, but there had been a recrudescence of opium cultivation in China itself, with the result that opium was grown more in China than perhaps in any other part of the world. The Government of India then restricted the export of Indian opium to other Far Eastern markets. The effect of this restriction was that instead of 42,600 chests yielding Rs. 8 crores revenue in 1910, there was the sale of only 7,500 chests yielding Rs. 1,21,00,000 in the current year. Then, as a result of the Hague Convention, India adopted a system by which no opium was exported except under license of the Government of the importing country. The Government were endeavouring to carry out this policy and the Govern-

ment would not be influenced by any financial considerations. Should any country wish to reduce the consumption and eradicate the evil the Government of India would not say no.

The resolution was lost without a division.

Life Assurance Claims.

Mr. SETHNA then introduced his Bill to amend the Succession Certificate Act, 1889, and in moving that it be referred to a Joint Committee of the Council and the Assembly of twelve members explained that its object was to incorporate a provision whereby any claimant to life assurance policy monies would be compelled to apply for a succession certificate in proof of his title. Difficulty had been experienced, he said, by reason of subordinate courts (in Bengal for instance) having held that a certificate was not necessary in certain cases. The certificate would be issued at a small cost to the claimant and the claim would be immediately settled. All life assurance companies, whether Indian or non-Indian with their head offices in India or elsewhere, could not but favour this Bill because of the help it would extend to them. If such a provision as that contemplated in the Bill was not expressly contained in the Act, life assurance companies stood the risk of having to pay a claim twice over, should it be proved subsequently that the title they first accepted was at all erroneous. It had been suggested by some lawyers that if it was provided that the word "debt" in the Act already in existence were stated to include moneys payable upon the death of a person under a policy of life assurance, then the position could be met. If the proposed Committee was of that opinion, he had no objection to its being considered.

Mr. CRERAR, on behalf of the Government, accepted the reference of the Bill to a Joint Committee. The Government, he said, fully appreciated the points mentioned by Mr. Natesan. It was desirable that Local Governments should be given an opportunity to express their opinion and to ascertain public opinion on the merits of the Bill. If the Bill was referred to a Joint Committee the Government of India would, by executive order, obtain the opinion of Local Governments and High Courts.

The motion for reference of the Bill to a Joint Committee was then accepted.

On the motion of Mr. CRERAR the Indian Prisons Bill, giving effect to certain recommendations of the Jail Committee, was passed.

General Discussion of the Budget

SIMLA—5TH MARCH 1925.

On the 5TH MARCH, the business of the Council of State was confined to the general discussion of the budget. Sir Umar HAYAT KHAN was the first to speak on the Budget. He congratulated the Finance Member on the surplus budget. He thanked the Government for the reduction in provincial contributions and for the pronouncement regarding Muslims in the services. The Muslims did not want any reform or any Government in which their voice might be drowned. He urged that the money reduced in provincial contributions should be set apart for sanitation and education.

The Hon'ble Mr. SETHNA congratulated Sir Basil Blackett for turning the corner after five successive deficit years and launching India again into surpluses. It was high time that this result was attained particularly because of the increase of several crores of rupees in taxation since the date of the reforms. He hoped that Sir Basil was correct in his assumption that exchange would not go lower than one shilling six pence, and that the Government would do all in their power to prevent its going lower. This assumption was strengthened by their proposal relating to the ways and means where a reduction of cash balance in London by 179 crores was proposed.

Mr. Sethna, dealing with exchange, said the Indian Merchants Chamber and Bureau, of which he was the President, did not see eye to eye with the Finance Member and invited him to visit the Bureau on his way to England so that they might have an opportunity of meeting his arguments. India might not be the heaviest taxed country in the world, but taking into account its poverty India could not by any means be said to be lightly taxed. Then again there was the dread of the recommendations of the Taxation Committee now sitting and Mr. Sethna asked his Committee to take note of the unanimous conclusions of the Royal Commission in regard to taxation in New Zealand.

After thanking the Commander-in-Chief for reducing the Military expenditure, Mr. Sethna complained that in the Budget Bengal had been unduly favoured and this partiality of Sir Basil towards Bengal might be due to the fact that he first saw the light of day in Calcutta. But this partiality was beyond comprehension when the Government of India did not know whether there would be surpluses in the next two years or not. Bombay had been treated as a step-child although like Bengal she had been clamouring for revision of the Meston settlement under which the Nation-building departments were practically arrested for want of funds. Bombay was an industrial province and in a normal year the amount of Incometax and Super tax collected in it was about one third of the total of the whole of India under that head. A fair percentage of this collection, Mr. Sethna claimed, was urgently needed for Bombay to enable the Transferred Departments to progress as they ought to. If more cotton mills of Bombay had not gone to the walls than now, it was because they laid by reserves during the boom period; but now so heavy were their losses that Mr. Sethna feared that the Income tax and Super tax revenue from the Bombay Presidency must drop by far more than a crore of rupees from the average in a normal year.

If Bombay was left in the cold in the matter of relief in provincial contribution, it had fared worse still on the subject of cotton excise. This duty was an obnoxious one and one of the greatest wrongs done to this country under British administration and was a standing blot on their financial policy. While relief was being afforded from the surplus to some of the provinces in their contribution and also to the services in higher pay and emoluments in accordance with the Lee Commission's recommendations, against the wishes of the people, the Finance Member did not choose to make even a passing reference to this most vexatious tax.

Mr. Sethna proceeding criticised the policy of the Government in writing off so large a sum as 423 crores made up of 82 lakhs, being discount charges on the 1923 loan and 341 crores of loans and advances to the Persian Government. This policy, he said, was contrary to what Sir Basil Blackett himself advocated a year ago. The sum of 341 crores was entirely the look-out to be repaid by them and it must therefore be struck off from India's suspense account. He mentioned these items with a view to show that if only the Government had had the will, it could have easily repealed the Cotton Excise duty and earned the gratitude of the nation and removed the suspicion that the duty was continued to help Lancashire at India's expense. If the Labour Government had been now in power, they would have done justice to India in this respect. Possibly opposition to the removal of this duty at present might have come from the present Conservative Government. In this connection Mr. Sethna suggested to His Excellency Lord Reading to discuss this point with the Secretary of State when he would be in England on leave.

Mr. Sethna regretted that the Government had not reduced the Customs duty on motor car in spite of a universal desire to that effect. Motors were not a luxury, but a necessity and Mr. Sethna quoted the views of the Chairman of the Trades Association delivered in Calcutta sometime ago. The speaker objected to the tax not being levied on the importation of silk, matches, etc., in the Indian States that had an opening to the sea and which passed them on to British India dishonestly. The continuation of higher postal rates was a misfortune.

Concluding, Mr. Sethna referred to the Government proposal to refund duty to certain provincial Governments in respect of the purchase of stores by those Governments outside India and urged on the Government the necessity of consolidation of Stores rules involving a deliberate policy to secure the Indian Industries a fair chance of success.

Sir Maneckjee DADABHOY congratulated the Finance Member for presenting a surplus Budget, but the surplus had been achieved after a succession of year, in which heavy taxations were imposed. Except the fact that customs revenue had increased by 2.72 crores, there had not been a general response in the matter of trade as anticipated by the Finance Member. The Textile Industry was still passing through a critical period and was living on its resources. If the situation continued, he feared a terrible crisis might result in India. The surplus of 324 crores presented by the Finance Member, did not represent the true position. It had been arrived at by making important modifications in the financial policy of the Government. He failed to understand the expediency of the policy of writing off eighty-two lakhs, being discount charges of 1923 loan and 341 crores of loans and advances to the Persian Government. This figure added to 324 crores of surplus, brought the total figure up to seven crores. The Government of India ought to have utilised this amount not only to remission of Provincial contributions, but also to removing certain imposts which were regarded by the country as wholly unjust. He did not grudge the remission of contributions to Madras, United

Provinces, Punjab and Burma, and even to Bengal, because it was the policy of the Government to work gradually to the extinction of the contributions, but it was the usual practice when a surplus occurred that the general tax-payer must get the advantage in the shape of a reduction of tax. There, however, appeared to be no hope for it this year, nor in the coming three years, if the policy of the Government was not to afford relief to the general tax-payer till the Provincial contributions were wiped off. Then it was a policy that was open to serious objection not only in this House but also in the country at large. He did not see why 73 lakhs should be kept in reserve while the estimate of the revenue for the next year had been placed on the most cautious estimate and while the Government had already kept up their sleeves a surplus of 4.25. The country had a right to get back this money in the form of some relief to the general tax-payer. A surplus of 72 lakhs against possible disappointments was not justified and if the time came for reapportionment of this sum a very large portion of it should go to Bombay which had a superior claim. As one who had signed the majority report of the Fiscal Commission, Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoj supported the claim for reduction, if not immediate abolition of Cotton Excise Duty which was promised by Lord Hardinge. He was glad that a sum of 4.78 crores had been provided for reduction or avoidance of public audit. This policy would raise the credit of India in the world. He was sorry that there had been ill-conceived opposition in the Assembly to this policy, but he assured Sir Basil Blackett of the support of this Council in this matter. Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoj complained that super-tax had been kept very high and in this connection promised the Finance Member support of this Council to any measure to prevent evasion of the tax. The super-tax had alienated the commercial community of India including the Marwari community from the Government. It was destructive of industrial initiative and enterprise. "This Assembly, constituted as it is of Swarajists, might be reluctant to reduce this tax now because it is anxious to create differences between the Government and the commercial community; but as a friend of the Government let me tell you that the present policy is a ruinous one. Before concluding, let me thank the Commander-in-Chief for reducing Military expenditure and hope that he will see his way to bring down the figure to what the Inchcape Committee had recommended, namely, 50 crores."

Mr. BELL congratulated the Finance Member on the favourable budget and congratulated particularly Mr. McWatters on the extraordinary grasp of details of the financial position when he lucidly explained all obscure points in presenting the budget. Mr. Bell took no exception to the writing off of 82 lakhs being discount charges on 1923 loan and 341 lakhs being amount of advances made to the Persian Government, because this was obviously a desirable procedure in each case. The first was a liability which they knew about, but the second was a liability of which they had no knowledge. It had been hanging over their heads, but came as a shock with the result that more than half of the real surplus of a good financial year had been wiped out in meeting it. But this House was entitled to know from the Finance Member whether there were other such sums for which provision might have to be made in future budgets. Referring to customs figures, Mr. Bell pointed out that the protective duties imposed last year had imposed on the country a burden of 2 and a one-fourth crores. This was only a part of the burden and who would have to bear the greater portion of it was known to all. As regards exchange, Mr. Bell said the more optimistic view of the Finance Member last year had been justified. He did not wish to refer too often to the policy of protection as a result of which a certain Act was passed last June, but this Council would observe that within a few months of passing of Steel protection Act a further burden had been placed on the shoulders of the public and that before the end of the current month a sum of sixty-two lakhs would have been paid in bounties and that was not the end of it by any means. Now that the storm raised over the recommendations of the Lee Commission had passed over and further time given for reflection, Mr. Bell did not think there was any member of this House who did not feel gratified that it had been possible to include in the revised figures for the current year provision to the extent of 25 lakhs towards pay, pension and concessions to superior services and that their claims had been met to some extent. The provision for avoidance of public debt was not one that would impose a very serious annual burden on the finances of the country. As regards Military expenditure Mr. Bell said that no country with great responsibilities could afford to take great risks and trusted that in their anxiety to effect every possible reduction, the Government would not be tempted to sacrifice efficiency to economy. Here Mr. Bell thanked the Government for passage concessions to officers of superior civil services granted in terms of the recommendations made by the Lee Commission. Continuing Mr. Bell assured Government that Bengal would be very grateful for further remission of provincial contributions for three years. Bengal also rejoiced in no grudging spirit to find that it had been possible to announce substantial

reductions in contributions of Madras, United Provinces, Punjab and Burma. They trusted that in not too distant future these Provincial contributions would be entirely and permanently cancelled, because they recognised that until this was done it would not in the first place be possible for provinces financially embarrassed as they were to develop along their own lines or in the second place for the Government to turn their attention to reduction of other taxation which was at present seriously hampering development of the country.

Sir Devaprased SARBADHIKARI said the discussion in the Council on the Budget reminded him of the discussion in the Councils of pre Minto Morley days, because the Finance Bill was now framed on the basis of discussion in the Assembly and this Council was powerless to do anything in the matter. He did not think that there was any immediate necessity for providing for redemption of debt because there was salt duty which still stood at the certificated level and postal rates had to be reduced. Touching Provincial contributions Sir Devaprased said that what Bengal got was only bare justice but at the same time he put in a plea for revision of the Meston award. As regards Military expenditure he supported the observations of Mr. Natesan and took Sir Umar Hayat Khan to task or his remarks about a National Army. What the Council wanted was that the Army should be national in the real and larger sense of the term.

Mr. Ramsarandas :—How many years should it take ?

Sir Devaprased :—“I do not think any honest soldier thinks that it will take a thousand years. Let there be not one Dehra Dun College, but ten, because military education is one of the essential factors of nation building. My complaint is that more provision had not been made for military education. Reference has been made to Sir B. N. Mitra's and Lord Rawlinson's mission to England in connection with the settlement of the War Office claims. We must be thankful for what has been done by them ; but my regret is that a great deal more could not be done. One cannot fail to recognise the immense services of Sir B. N. Mitra and I am glad recognition of it came from the Government, when they select him for the post of Executive Councillor, and I hope that in that Council he will not get spoiled”. (Laughter)

H. E. Lord RAWLINSON said that the reasons for reduction in Military Expenditure were largely due to the strict economy instituted by the assistance of the Inchcape Committee and to the return of normal times compared with what was obtained some five years ago. Mr. Natesan had referred to the feeling of suspicion that existed throughout the country with regard to the intentions and policy of the Government on Military expenditure. There was no denying that suspicion existed and it was one of the greatest difficulties which he and the Government had to overcome. He doubted whether they would ever overcome that suspicion. After all, they were all suspicious when their interests were in the hands of somebody else, those actual motives and desires they did not quite understand. It was only human nature that there must be some suspicion as to whether their immediate interests would be pushed in the direction they all desired. There was nothing that he could say, that would eliminate and overcome the whole of that suspicion. The Government of India had done their best and would continue to do their best to overcome that suspicion and to deserve a little more confidence ; but he could not say when they would be ever able to entirely overcome that doubt. Reference had been made to the visit of himself and Sir B. N. Mitra to London in connection with disputes with the War Office. Here again, there was suspicion that the interests of India were not perhaps being pushed with the strength that they might have been. Sir B. N. Mitra and he himself had fought hard on this matter before the higher authorities, who would not do everything in their favour, but the results they were able to achieve would mature to the benefit of India at no distant date.

Mr. Lalubhai SAMALDAS said that, though they had their differences with Sir Basil Blackett, he felt that the Budget showed they had a sincere cause for congratulation. The speaker drew the attention of the Finance Member to the feelings expressed by Lord Curzon for State aid to Indian Industries. A special responsibility lay on the Government to raise the country industrially. The claim of the most important industry should not, therefore, have been neglected and the Cotton Excise Duty should have been remitted. He said that India had enough of communal jealousies and deprecated the introduction of Provincial jealousies. He pointed out that, while Sir Basil Blackett had himself laid down a year ago that payments of discount on loans were spread over a number of years, he had himself this year gone back on that principle by providing paying off discount in a lump sum. He said that the Finance Member the day before took objection to the remarks that he had shown sympathy to Calcutta and antipathy to Bombay. The speaker did not question the Finance Member's motive, but pressed with

equal force that Bombay's view was also put forward in the interest of the whole of India and that Sir Basil Blackett had unnecessarily emphasised in his Budget speech that Bombay was pressing reversion of exchange solely in her interest.

Sir S. R. M. M. Annamalai CHETTIAR said that it was a very interesting Budget because of the separation of Railway from General Budget. He said that the general taxpayer had the first claim to the surplus and that the Meston award was unjust because it led to heavier burden on some Province than on the other. It was a matter of gratification that the military expenditure was reduced and he appealed to the Commander-in-Chief to effect further reduction so that money so saved might be spent on nation-building departments. He said lack of funds in his Province had stood in the way of education and sanitation and felt grateful to the Finance Member for partial relief given by reduction of Provincial contribution. He concluded by saying that the era of deficits was over and the era of hope and progress was ahead.

Sir Basil BLACKETT thanked the House for the shower of congratulations which would encourage him, and the Finance Department to continue to do their best. He agreed with the last speaker as to the paramount need for the development of agriculture. By reducing provincial contribution the Government was precisely doing the same and was helping the provincial Governments to push forward their programme in respect of nation-building department. The Finance Member then began to calculate that if he were to accept the suggestions made by the various members of the House to reduce taxation then he would find himself on the wrong side to the extent of 20 crores instead of having his surplus of 75 lakhs.

Sir Basil Blackett referred to the suggestion of Sir Maneckji Dadabhoi that the realised surplus of over 4 crores in 1923-24 should have been used to take off the cotton excise duty and super tax. He could have done so because the surplus was not recurring, and he could not utilise it for giving up recurring sources of taxation. The answer was so simple. Instead of using the surplus of four crores for reduction of the debt, he had used 80 lakhs out of it to pay off discount of the Loan, and 341 lakhs in respect of loan to the Persian Government. By paying off 80 lakhs in a lump sum he had increased the surplus of the year by four and half lakhs, and had relieved the Finance of a similar obligation for a number of years.

As for the provision for 341 lakhs he did not agree with Mr. Bell that it had been disclosed for the first time. It had appeared as an outstanding amount in the accounts of the Secretary of State. It has been shown in the audit report of the Home Auditor. Of course it had not hitherto drawn the attention of the members. The liability which was covered by 341 lakhs was without dispute, and was incurred more than nine years ago, and the reasons for it had now become a matter of history. There was of course a dispute about the expenditure incurred in East Persia which the Government of India had refused to recognise as their liability, while the War Office had always claimed that India shared the liability. India's point of view was forcefully represented by Lord Rawlinson, the Commander-in-Chief and Sir B. N. Mitra in England recently. As a result of that, new proposals were under consideration, and soon they hoped to come to an agreement. He assured Mr. Bell that the liability would not be very heavy, that the current year's surplus would be enough to meet it. India also had claims against the War Office and on the whole they did not know which side the final balance would go.

The Finance Member then dealt with the question of Cotton Excise Duty. He admitted that Lord Hardinge gave a pledge that the duty would be removed as soon as financial considerations permitted it. Of course this pledge was given in 1915 when the Provincial contributions formed no part of the central revenue. Logically therefore so long as the provincial contribution remained they could not say that they had a surplus and could not devote their attention to reducing the central taxation. Some members had referred to the fact that he was keeping 74 lakhs as too big a surplus against contingencies and misadventure. The Finance Member explained that out of this only 18 lakhs surplus was recurring, which could be available for either further reduction in the contribution or in taxation, but he asked if the House thought that 18 lakhs was a big surplus to carry with them against unforeseen contingencies. By asking him to reduce the Cotton Excise Duty on the basis of the non-recurring surplus they were really putting his balance on the wrong side. Next year he would however assure the House that the Government of India have every intention of fulfilling the pledge in respect of the Cotton Excise Duty (applause) but the time had not yet arrived. They must admit that the claims of the provinces were prior and supposing the Cotton Excise Duty were now abolished, it would only postpone the day when the contribution of the Bombay

Government would be reduced and remitted and the question of the Meston award would be reopened.

The Finance Member assured Mr. Lallubhai Samaldas that the speaker's remarks about Bombay in his Budget did not question the sincerity of Bombay in holding the opinion about the Exchange honestly. Only Bombay appeared to have paid lesser attention to the interests of India as a whole. He reminded Mr. Lallubhai that Bombay had never minced words in vigorously attacking the Finance Department of the Government of India. (Laughter.)

Sir Basil Blackett next replied to the various suggestions made. He said the remission of kerosene duty would mean considerable loss to the revenue. On the other hand reduction in petrol duty might bring in an increased revenue. He admitted that the super-tax diminished savings, and that its remission would help the trade by cheapening money. Similarly high tax on motors was hindering full development of a useful form of transportation. He mentioned that commercial cars did not pay 30 per cent duty, but only private cars were so charged. The Government could not, however, indulge yet in the luxury of taking off these taxes. There were other forms of taxes, which weighed heavily on the poor. He did not want to draw a distinction between the rich and the poor and admitted that the industrial and agricultural development of India was retarded by high taxation. They were not, however, within sight of early action in the direction of reduction in taxation. Concluding Sir Basil Blackett again defended the debt redemption scheme and warned those who wanted to raid it partly that they would be making India pay the same amount by way of interest that they were now paying in the sinking fund.

Thus the Budget discussion came to an end and the Council adjourned for a week.

On the 12TH MARCH, the Council of State reassembling, on the motion of the Commander-in-Chief the Cantonments House Accommodation Act Amendment Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly was passed.

Haj Pilgrims Bill.

Sir Mahomed HABIBULLAH, moved the consideration of the Haj Pilgrims Bill, as passed by the Assembly. He regarded it as a humanitarian piece of legislation. He related the inconvenience and discomfort to which pilgrims were put in the course of their tours. Either public funds had to come to the rescue to repatriate destitute Moslems to India, or private charities had to be tapped for the same purpose. That state of affairs should be ended. There was no question of mending it. The present age of destitution had been increasing during the last few years, and in 1924 it became necessary for the Government to introduce an experimental system of demanding the deposit of return tickets in the case of every pilgrim intending to go to the Hedjaz. The result was that the percentage appreciably decreased. But when it was remembered that there was still an element of option in that system, it was not possible to eradicate the evil altogether. It was not fair to the general tax-payer that the Government of India should be called upon to shoulder the financial responsibility incidental to the repatriation of a large number of pilgrims who went without means to return to their homes. In 1921 the Government had to spend Rs. 40,000, in 1923-24 the expenditure was Rs. 35,000. It therefore became necessary to devise means for suppressing the evil. The Dutch East Indies and Malaya, both of which contributed 42 per cent. of the pilgrims every year, had introduced a compulsory return ticket system.

The Bill was passed without opposition.

Mr. CHADWICK moved the consideration of the Cotton Ginning and Pressing Bill as passed by the Assembly. The Bill was passed without any opposition.

Frontier Committee Report.

Syeed RAZA ALI moved a resolution urging the Government to give effect at an early date to the Frontier Committee Report. He referred to the events which led to the appointment of the Committee. That Committee examined 22 official witnesses, 18 of whom were European officers. The non-official Indian witnesses examined numbered 76, of whom 28 were Hindus, the rest being Mussalmans. The widest publicity was given to the proceedings of the Committee, which attracted even the non-co-operators, who tendered their evidence. It was unfortunate that the report of the Committee was not unanimous. Messrs. Rangachariar and Samarth had drawn up their own separate report, but that did not affect the question contained in his resolution. The main question before the Committee was whether it was expedient to separate the unadministered tracts from the five Settled Districts of the Frontier and if so, whether those five Settled Districts

could be reamalgamated with the Punjab, as it was before 1900 when they were dismembered from the Punjab, and if separation was not expedient and amalgamation with the Punjab impossible, what administrative reforms were necessary.

The Majority section of the Committee had, in view of the intimate relations that existed between the people of the cis-border and trans-border areas, come to the conclusion that separation of the tracts was impossible. Expert opinion on the question was wide and voluminous. When separation of the Settled Districts from the adjoining areas was considered impossible, the Majority consequently ruled out the amalgamation of the Settled Districts with the Punjab. The Majority then proceeded to make liberal recommendations for the administration of the frontier districts. They suggested the establishment of a legislation therein and the appointment of an Executive Council and a Minister. It was proposed to give Hindus double their share of representation in the Council on the lines of the Congress-League Pact of 1916. The Majority further recommended the appointment of an Additional Judicial Commissioner and suggested a drastic curtailment of the Frontier Crimes Regulation. Such were the liberal recommendations by the Committee, which Mr. Raza Ali contented should be given effect to without any delay, because the people of the Frontier were getting impatient at not having obtained any kind of reforms along with the rest of India in 1919.

Subsequently, after a long debate, the resolution was withdrawn.

Savings Bank Interest on Mahomedan Deposits.

Mr. Haroon JAFFER moved that the Government should keep a separate account of the interest payable by the Government on deposit accounts in the Post Office savings banks opened by Mahomedan depositors who, owing to their religious belief, had made a request that no interest should be credited to them, and that that sum should be set aside as a special fund, to which also any interest on Government Securities foregone by Mahomedan holders under similar circumstances should be credited. It was proposed that that fund should be utilised in awarding scholarships to poor Mahomedan students in the Moslem University at Aligarh. There were several Mahomedans who refused to take interest through religious scruples on loans and deposits in banks. Whatever the origin or justification of the idea the effect could not be ignored that some Mahomedans considered it a meritorious deed enjoined by religion to forego interest. They kept money in banks only for safe custody, and they invested in Government Securities as a means of providing safety for their savings. If education was to spread among Mahomedans, the vast majority of whom were very poor and backward, then the suggestion should be adopted. The Government could not have any objection to utilising the money for that noble cause. It was not their money, but the money of the Mahomedan depositors. It was not difficult to devise machinery for awarding and distributing the proposed scholarships.

Haji Ismail Choudhry, Khan Sahib Aman Ali and Mr. Yamin Khan supported the resolution. They said it was a laudable object and the Moslem community were in favour of the resolution.

Mr. McWATTERS explained what he called the non-committal attitude of the Government. He said that in the savings banks the Mahomedans had at present Rs. 3 and half lakhs bearing interest at about Rs. 10,000. There would be no difficulty in keeping a separate account of that for whatever object that would be decided upon. Regarding cash certificates also, there would be no difficulty. But the trouble was in Government securities, which were transferable. If the community favoured the proposal of Mr. Jaffer, then Government would have to introduce a system by which all Mahomedan investors in Government securities would have to take a non-transferable deposit receipt. But the other difficulty was that those who would part with their interest might insist on other charitable objects. Unless, therefore, the Government felt sure that the Mahomedan opinion was more or less unanimous, it would be difficult for them to proceed on the lines suggested in the resolution.

Sir Devaprasad SARBADHIKARI supported the resolution, and asked the Government to accept it and then decide, in consultation with the Moslems, upon what form the money should be spent.

The Finance Bill.

On the 20TH MARCH the Finance Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly came up for consideration in the Council of State. Large number of members of the Assembly were present in the galleries.

Mr. McWATTERS, Finance Secretary, in moving for the consideration of the Finance Bill, explained the chief features. While a year ago the Government hoped on the existing basis of taxation to balance their budget, this year they were in a position if the Bill was passed, in the form they desired, i.e., if the Salt Tax was restored to make the first and substantial reduction in provincial contributions. He referred to the reduction in Petrol duty and justified it on the ground that the 15 lakhs loss that would be incurred could be made up by the increased revenue expected in the long run by increase in the Import of motor cars and lorries and motor accessories. He also justified the provision for Paper Currency Reserve as justified in the present circumstances. As regards the Salt duty he would move an amendment to restore it to one rupee and four annas per maund. If this was not restored, there would be loss to revenue of about 125 lakhs.

Mr. V. RAMADASS opposed the consideration of the Finance Bill on the ground that Government had forfeited the confidence of the people of this country and were neither responsive nor responsible in any form. There was no element of responsible legislature, and whatever might the representatives of the people demand, the Executive could ignore them lightly and, indeed, whatever cuts were proposed by the representatives in the popular chamber (Assembly) and whatever reductions in expenditure were proposed were either restored or certified by the Governor-General. Where then was the element of responsibility in the Central Government? It was no use in deluding themselves and in deluding the people that this Government was based on the popular will, because neither in theory nor in practice was there responsibility. This was the view not only of the Swarajists, but of also the Independents as evidenced by the rejection of allowances for members of the Executive Councillors. The moment that motion was carried in the Assembly, the members of the Executive Council, particularly the Indian members, ought to have resigned their seats, because they were on the Executive Council, not merely to carry on the administration of Government, but to voice the popular view. There could be no better means of voicing that view than by resigning their seats after the vote of censure was carried. They would have thus established a convention where none existed.

Proceeding, Mr. Ramadass referred to the policy of the Government on the question of the Reforms when the President said, that he would not allow a general discussion of the Reforms or general policy of the Government on a motion for consideration of the Finance Bill. The members would be in order on such a motion to criticise the financial policy of the Government. Beyond that the President would not allow any other subject.

Mr. Ramadass drew the attention of the President to the fact that in the lower house, the President allowed a discussion of the general policy of the Government and on the Reforms when a similar motion for consideration of the Finance Bill was made. He appealed to the President to admit discussion with a view to clarify the situation.

After a few seconds Mr. Ramadass said, that if the President was to stick to his ruling, then he was obliged to confine his observation to financial policy. Mr. Ramadass then referred to military expenditure and complained that the Legislature had no hand in framing the budget. There was no need to provide for debt redemption at a time when the credit of the Government of India was high. There was need for reducing the postal rates, the duty on kerosene oil and salt tax and not provide prematurely for paying up money borrowed for productive capital. The whole position turned on the fact that the Government of India was not based on popular will. Let the Executive do as they please. It was the duty of those elected by the people to refuse to consider the Bill.

Sir Narasimha SARMA, leader of the House, vigorously challenged the statement of Mr. Ramadass that the Government of India did not enjoy the confidence of the people of this country. So many half-truths and untruths and mischievous misrepresentations had been made both here and in the interests of the general well-being of the people that the Government ought not to allow the challenge of that description to go unanswered. He regretted to find that Mr. Ramadass and his friends had adopted an attitude which if persisted would only lead to disaster. As a senior member of the Government he wanted to explain the progress made in India during the last five years to show that far from deserving a vote of censure they deserved a vote of confidence. They deserved the recognition of sympathy and satisfaction, if not gratitude.

When Sir Narasimha SARMA proceeded to detail the achievements of the Government, Mr. Ramadass asked the President to state if, when he had ruled out a discussion of the general policy of the Government in any particular, the leader of the House could dwell upon the achievements of the Government.

President: I was awaiting to see if the leader of the House did intend to refer to any specifications of the Government in detail. I shall be obliged if the leader of the House confines himself to the general aspect and not make any detailed references except on the financial policy of the Government.

Sir Narasimha SARMA said that he did not want to deviate from the ruling of the chair. He contended that financially the Government had inherited a very difficult situation in 1920 but they had been able to overcome and present a satisfactory budget. It would be remembered that men's minds were unhinged as a result of the war and immediately after there were the Punjab occurrences followed by failure of crops and the influenza epidemic. The Government had at such a time to meet Treasury Bills to a large amount and there were also at the time external disturbances requiring additional expenditure. But the Government with the assistance, the loyal assistance and co-operation of both the Houses of the Legislature, were able to face the situation. Were we to embark on a policy of retrenchment? True, the military expenditure was large and that if money was required for development purposes the military expenditure should be reduced. As a result of their policy the Government have been able to maintain cordial relations on the Frontier. They had established the Chamber of Princes and made other changes which brought the Indian States under the direct control of the Government of India. These would in course of time make possible for the constitution of a federal Government.

The Government had not been idle in the economic sphere either. They had spent more than 50 crores and brought 20 million acres under crops. The Railway programme had been pushed forward. The Cotton industry had been placed on solid foundation. A policy of discriminating protection was being followed in order to help the Indian industries and labour legislation had been taken in hand. So everything had been done so far as financial circumstances permitted. Now the position was bright. The Government of India was now pursuing a policy of reducing outside debt and Sir Basil Blackett was doing everything in that direction. It was just what they in the Congress had been demanding for several years. The Government had now provided for the healthy Indianisation of the services. Thus it would be seen that since 1920 they had advanced a great deal.

No Government could say it had not made a mistake; but the Government of India practised extreme tolerance to show to a certain section of the Indian people the unwisdom of carrying on their unhealthy activities. He admitted that they had not fully succeeded in doing so; but the heart of the people was sound and if only the ignorance of the masses was not taken advantage of by a certain section the situation would vastly improve.

He did not want to deal with the question of reforms in detail. It was perfectly legitimate on the part of those who had entered the Legislature to advance the cause of the Reforms to the extent that prudence dictated, but he had been asked by Mr. Ramadoss to resign because the Assembly had carried a motion refusing allowances for members of the Executive Council. If he (Mr. Sarma) felt convinced that he had done anything in the Executive Council of which he was ashamed, if he felt that he was not receiving that co-operation from his colleagues on the Executive Council then he should have felt bound to resign his place. But to ask him to resign merely because the Assembly wanted to make a general attack on the Government policy was ridiculous. If Mr. Ramadoss could show that the Government had on any particular account done anything detrimental to the interests of the public of this country he would certainly resign. The motion to which Mr. Ramadoss referred related to the resentment of the Assembly that the Muddiman Committee Report was not satisfactory. The Government of India had not even discussed that report and yet friends of Mr. Ramadoss wanted the members of the Executive Council to resign. If the Government of India as a whole had come to a decision which in his (speaker's) opinion was detrimental to the interests of the people of this country then it would be time for him to resign. Meanwhile to ask him to resign was ridiculous. If the Government members were to take their position of responsibility so lightly and were to resign their seats on a motion of the description to which Mr. Ramadoss referred then the Government would be powerless. Indeed, he refused to think that any responsible member, European or Indian, would give weight to a vote of that description.

Sir Basil BLACKETT said he did not propose to deal with the political question which had been fully and admirably dealt with by Sir Narasimha Sarma. If the policy of obstruction was to be pursued to prove that the framers of the Constitution were wise in putting emergency provisions that had arisen that purpose had been served; but continuance of that policy would not take them a step further.

First of all he concentrated on meeting the criticism often advanced about high taxation that had been imposed since 1913-14. Some had said that taxation had gone up by 48 crores and some had put forward other figures. He took the trouble to ascertain the correct position by comparing revenues in 1913-14 with that in 1923-24, when fresh taxation was imposed last. The revenue of India in 1913-14 stood at a total of 71 crores, 85 lakhs, inclu-

ding proceeds from land revenue of 31 crores, two lakhs. The revenue of India in 1913-14 stood at a total of 71 crores, 85 lakhs, including proceeds from land revenue of 31 crores, two lakhs. The revenue of India in 1923-24 stood at a total of 135 crores, 86 lakhs. Taking the index figure of 100 the revenue of India had increased from 100 to 187 from 1913-14 to 1923-24. During the same period the population of British India had increased from over 243 millions to over 247 millions. The revenue in 1913-14 was calculated to be Rs 2.15 per head compared with Rs. 5.8 per head in 1923-24. The main increase in the revenue had occurred under Customs and Income-tax. Of course, the customs duty was paid by the whole of India and not merely by British India.

He next turned to examine the increase in wholesale prices and taking the index figure of Bombay he found that during the same decade wholesale prices had risen from 100 to 182. Thus between 1913-14 and 1923-24 taxation had gone up almost exactly in proportion to the increase in prices. Therefore the commodity value of the Government revenue was very little more than what it was before. He did not say that the point was very accurate, but these figures should supply a useful corrective to unthinking statements that the cost of administration and military expenditure had risen to staggering proportions. The Government record was thus better than its critics would allow. People who went into a shop to buy goods to-day paid the same proportion for value of the services as they paid for the services of the Government compared with 1913-14. This was creditable when they recognised that during the decade the great war had occurred and had cost India considerably.

In the case of railway fares and rates the department of Sir Charles Innes was charging lesser in proportion to the increase in wholesale prices. Therefore railways in terms of commodities were cheaper to-day than before the war. Prof. Hamilton delivered the other day an interesting lecture in Patna on the subject. So far as land revenue was concerned the return from it had risen during the decade from 31 crores 20 lakhs to 34 crores 62 lakhs. Thus in terms of commodity the burden of land revenue had been considerably diminishing and wherever there was permanent settlement it went on diminishing as prices changed. He had made these observations to apply correction to the charge of extravagance against the Government. The whole system of taxation was however now under enquiry. He hoped this was the subject in which the whole country was interested. He realised that the fact that taxation had not been above the commodity value compared with pre-war prices, did not mean that the burden on the individual tax-payer was the same. He expressed his views on the rupee tax a fortnight ago.

His speech should not be understood as suggesting that he was not in favour of reduction in taxation and expenditure. As regards army estimates he did not think they could now look forward to large savings under this head though they would continue to economise as far as possible. He thought improvement should be in the direction of increased yield from the existing sources of taxation. He also hoped that as a result of the debt redemption scheme considerable saving would result in charges on account of interest. Indeed he looked forward to a decrease in expenditure under this head and to increase in their total revenue to get rid of provincial contributions and make reductions in other items. They had however to remember that some items like excise and opium revenues were not on secure footing. On the other hand he hoped for increase from such sources as railways.

The motion for taking the Finance Bill into consideration was then put to vote and passed, only Mr. Ramadass crying "No."

Restoration of Salt-Tax.

Mr. McWATERS next moved the amendment to restore salt-tax to Re. 1-4-0 per maund. This rate of tax, he said, had been in force for the last nine years with the exception of one year when it was doubled. The rate of Re. 1-4-0 was in force at the time the reformed constitution was put in operation and the promise of eventual extinction of provincial contribution was given on the basis of this tax at Re. 1-4-0. He now asked the House to restore that rate to enable the Government to redeem its pledge and reduce the contributions this year substantially. If, however, the tax remained at Re. 1 the Government would lose Rs. 90 lakhs this year and 125 lakhs in the succeeding years. They would thus lose 6 crores in 5 years at a time when the provinces were crying for money for schemes of development. This morning's telegram reported that the Madras Council had unanimously carried the motion of adjournment against the reduction of salt tax by the Assembly. Indeed the speaker felt that one of the causes which had retarded the healthy development of the constitution had been lack

of funds. As regards the so-called burden on the consumer which reduction in duty by four annas would relieve it would result in the removal of the tax of three-fifths of an anna per head per annum. This might be the only gain to the consumer on a theoretical basis but in practice even this would go in to the pocket of middlemen. For the sake of this insignificant advantage they were sacrificing 125 lakhs a year. Indeed they would be sacrificing substance for shadow.

Mr. RAMADASS opposed the Government amendment. The Assembly, he said, was primarily responsible for taxation and should not be upset. He held that man's right to eat salt ought to be as free as his right to breathe air. Mr. Ramadass contended that the budget contained room where retrenchment could be made and the salt tax be fixed at Re. 1 decided by the Assembly. It was not the duty of the Council to frame the budget. That was the function of the Executive. This Council had no hand in it.

The House divided and Mr. McWatter's amendment to restore salt duty was carried by 35 votes against 4. These 4 were Mr. V. Ramadass Mr. K. V. Rangaswamy Iyengar, Mr. Vedamurthi and Mr. Karandikar.

Reduction of Postal Rates.

Mr. RAMADASS next moved the amendment to reduce the rates of postcards to quarter anna. He said that the raising of postal rate was a war measure and it was high time that some relief was given to the poor specially when the cost of living had gone up. Against the argument that the higher rates were justifiable because the Post and Telegraph Department should be self-supporting, Mr. Ramadass said that the postal department rendered services to many departments like Customs and also to Indian States. Unless the accounts were separated and the principle of commercialization was thoroughly introduced, it was difficult for the House to know how much the department had contributed towards the running of the Postal Department. The rate of postage could be reduced by reducing the number of highly paid superior officers. He strongly appealed to the House to support his amendment.

The amendment of Mr. Ramadass was rejected without division.

Finance Bill Passed.

Mr. McWATTERS next moved that the Finance Bill as passed by the Assembly and as amended by this Council be passed.

Mr. RAZA ALI took the Assembly to task for reducing the salt duty on a false issue, thereby placing the members of this House in an awkward situation. He justified the salt tax being put at one rupee and four annas, but suggested that the question of reduction might be seriously taken next year.

Mr. KARANDIKAR, while supporting the passage of the Bill, asked the Government not to forget the poor man's salt. If necessary they might consider the situation in the light of the recommendations of the Taxation Enquiry Committee.

Mr. RAMADASS opposed the passage of the Bill and said that in so doing he was only entering a constitutional protest.

The Bill as amended was passed. Mr. Ramadass being the only dissident.

Remission of Provincial Contributions.

On the 23RD MARCH the Council of State disposed of official business only. Loud applause greeted the announcement made by the Secretary that the Legislative Assembly had agreed to the amendment made by the Council of State to the Finance Bill, namely restoration of salt tax. Mr. McWATTERS moved the Government resolution regarding remission of provincial contributions in the same terms as was passed by the Legislative Assembly on the motion of Sir Basil Blackett. The speech with which the Finance Secretary recommended the acceptance of the resolution was brief and in the main covered the grounds advanced by the Finance Member in the Assembly. He added that the Government was grateful to the Council and the Assembly in passing the Finance Bill in the form presented by the Government and thereby enabling them to make substantial remission of contributions.

On the motion of Mr. Lallubhai SAMALDAS the Council agreed to the addition of a rider to the resolution recommending to Provincial Governments that the amounts released or given to the Provincial Government be mainly devoted to expenditure in the Transferred departments.

Mr. McWATTERS did not oppose the amendment, but he made it clear that the circumstances differed in each province and the Government had no information justifying any

partition of sums between the two sides of the Provincial Governments. The Government was anxious that as much money as was available should be spent in nation-building departments, but the Government must approach the matter with caution.

The amendment of Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas was carried and the original resolution with this rider was accepted.

Other Measures.

On the motion of Mr. Chadwick, Commerce Secretary the Council passed the Indian Tariff Bill as passed by the Assembly. Then finally on the motion of Mr. McWatters the Stamp Bill and the Income-Tax Amendment Bill as passed by the Assembly were passed.

On the 24TH MARCH on the motion of Sir Mahomed Habibullah, the Council passed the Cotton Cess Act Amendment Bill as already passed by the Assembly.

The Bengal Ordinance Bill.

Sir Narasimha SARMA then announced that the only business left was the Bill to supplement the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, and it was hoped to place the Bill before the Council the next day in the form in which it was originally introduced in the Assembly.

A good deal of discussion ensued as to the date on which the Bill should be discussed in the Council. Divergence of view was expressed and eventually the President decided that it would be convenient both to the Government and the Council if the Bill was formally placed before the Council the next day and discussion taken up on Thursday the 26th.

Accordingly the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act Supplementary Bill, as recommended by the Governor-General was placed in the Council of State on the 25th March and discussed next day, the 26TH MARCH, for over five hours and passed, oppositionists not claiming division although they had opposed the Bill, especially clause 6, which suspends the Habeas Corpus Act.

Earlier in the day, the motion for the consideration of the Bill was vigorously opposed by non-officials, but was carried by 20 votes against three, the latter being Messrs. Rangaswami Iyengar, Karandikar, and Sukhbir Sinha, while during the discussion, Messrs. Ramadass and Vecamurthi had walked out of the Chamber as a protest against the passing of the Bill at the point of the bayonet, as they described Lord Reading's recommendation.

Mr. CREER, in moving that it be taken into consideration, said he did not intend to inflict upon the House a recapitulation of the melancholy series of crimes and outrages which had rendered necessary the enactment of special legislation in Bengal. The Governor-General in promulgating an Ordinance for that purpose issued a statement and though he regretted that some tragic items had still to be added to that tragic category it still stood a concise and cogent justification of the action which was then taken and which the Council of State was invited to endorse. The formidable recrudescence of revolutionary conspiracy, designed to subvert the Government by violence, and the preparation of a series of horrid outrages with that object, could no longer be regarded as a matter of controversy. The facts were on record. They were admitted even by those who most solemnly denounced the action of the Government and they were avowed by revolutionaries themselves. It was unhappily the fact that when a matter such as this had been for a long time under discussion and under controversy there was a dangerous and deplorable tendency for the facts to degenerate into phrases. He urged the Hon. Members to envisage the circumstances of those facts and give due weight to their terrible implications. It appeared to him a very difficult conclusion to say: "A revolutionary conspiracy with these objects was in existence; but it was not a matter of great importance."

They were not dealing merely with academical associations of theoretical Nihilists, but with men who believed less in propaganda and pamphlets, than in pistols and picric acid, who, though they indulged in both preferred murders to manifestoes and who had acted and were prepared to act on these beliefs and these preferences. The Government did indeed require special procedure in order to give due application of penal laws. Above all else, what they required was an effective measure of prevention, of precaution and of protection and those which had been taken were not hasty and ill-considered expedients. They had emerged from prolonged and exhaustive enquiries of the past and ascertained results of experience. They were supported by a consensus of opinion from successive Governors and from judicial, administrative and executive officers of every variety of experience. Could it be argued that these were hasty, ill-considered and rashly

undertaken? Measures of this character were resorted to in Bengal during the years of war and the immediate result of those measures was that, by the year 1918, an end had been put to the long series of similar outrages which unhappily found their place in the annals of Bengal in those years.

Continuing, Mr. Crerar said it would be abdication of the Government to permit a revolutionary organisation to pursue its course and perfect its machinery to a stage which would enable it to suspend the rule of law and defy the Government. So long at least as the axiom was accepted, the fundamental duty of the Government was to preserve public security on which political advance and all functions of a civilised organism depended.

Turning to the immediate object of the Bill, the Home Secretary said in the first place it provided for an appeal to the High Court by any person convicted on trial by commission. It provided also for confirmation of any death sentence which might be passed by the Commissioners. Those were the safeguards which the Government of India and all authorities who had to consider this measure deemed necessary and proper in order to ensure a just and equitable operation of the Bengal Act now on the Statute Book. There were provisions which would authorise the Government of Bengal in any case in which it was found necessary to commit a person to jail outside the province of Bengal and the object of that was the interests of public security, in order that, when such a necessity arose, a person against whom such an order was made may be removed from his dangerous associations and from the scene of his activities. He did not deny that the grant to the Executive Government of the powers of that character was a very serious matter, but if this measure was to have any effect it must be made effective from the outset. He had heard the authority of Lord Morley quoted as a ground of criticism against the principles of such a measure. In reply he quoted Lord Morley in which the latter had said that his view was that the powers given under the Regulation of 1818 did constitute in emergency powers which might be lawfully applied, if there was an emergency.

Concluding Mr. Crerar did not think that he had left it open to any candid Judge to enquire whether behind the brief clauses of this Bill or the more comprehensive, but equally undisguised provisions of the measure which it supplemented, there was concealed any subtlety of policy or any unexplained intention. It had been alleged that this measure, taking advantage of some insane outrages committed by irresponsible and isolated individuals, was aimed at a political party whose activities had been embarrassing to the Government. He would not plead to a charge so absurd, so manifestly untenable, so remote from facts; but he would not deny that this Bill was inspired by a political motive. The Government of India were, with His Majesty's Government and with the Parliament and with the British people, pledged to a programme of political advance in India towards Self-Government. "They perceive clearly, perhaps more clearly than their critics who are not so closely in touch with the forces which make for progress as with those which make for retardation, that nothing could be more fatal to these intentions and these aspirations than the obstacles which are interposed by lawlessness and violence by the cult of the pistol and the bomb. The Government are determined to do all that in them lies to remove these obstacles and to keep open the path for all men of good-will to walk in, without let or hindrance. That is the political motive, and is the resolve, the determination which inspires this measure." (Applause).

Mr. YAMIN KHAN regretted that in promulgating the Bengal Ordinance, the Governor-General did not share his responsibility with the Indian Legislature. This Bill was to supplement that Ordinance, and what was more regrettable was that it had come before this House with the recommendation that it be passed in the form as originally introduced. The necessary conclusion was that this Council had not the right to say that it agreed to this clause and was opposed to the other. Now, however the Governor General has taken upon himself the entire responsibility for the passage of the Bill in the form as introduced and on the basis of facts which had been communicated to him by the Bengal Government, but which had not been placed before this Council. In the circumstances it was not fair for this House to either oppose or support the present Bill. The only possible course was to leave the Bill to be passed by those members who wanted to share the responsibility with the Governor-General. He, for his part, was not prepared to accept the responsibility, because he was not convinced of the necessity for the Ordinance. No doubt Lord Reading considered it necessary to pass the Bill as recommended; but the procedure adopted by the members of this Council would have been very different if the Bill had come up before this Council in the first instance. On the other hand, it had been certified by the Governor-General. There must have been certain reasons which made the Governor-General adopt this attitude; but this Council was

not in possession of even those reasons. He therefore, left the Bill to be passed with the vote of those who were in possession of the secret facts and felt that it must be passed.

Mr. NATESAN said he could not respond to the appeal of Mr. Crerar. He spoke, he said with a deep sense of responsibility and with a heavy heart. He confessed with shame that there was an anarchist movement in Bengal, the existence of which was acknowledged by more than one leader of a well-known party. He condemned the anarchists, because they were enemies to India. It was nothing but illusion to suppose that self-government could be achieved by anarchist methods. He did not share the view that the Ordinance was aimed at Swarajists as such. He agreed that the anarchist must be put down, but he did not agree with Mr. Crerar that the Ordinance and the Supplementasy Bill were the only methods of putting down anarchists. Facilities which were given even to Sir Roger Casement had been denied to the accused under this Act. While on the one hand the right of appeal had been conferred, on the other hand the ancient privilege of Habeas Corpus had been denied and the accused could be detained for any indefinite period. Much had been said of Lord Morley's views. Mr. Natesan argued that much water had flown under the bridge. It was a matter of deep regret that this Bill had been brought before the Legislature at a time when the non-co-operators were becoming co-operators. The Bill would also become an Act, but he asked the Government to realise their responsibility in this matter. He urged the Government to see that the evidence against each accused be placed before the Commissioner and that all reasonable facilities be given to him to explain his innocence. He feared that by bringing this Bill, in the manner the Government had done, they were thinning the ranks of the co-operators. He begged the Government not to convert India into another Ireland. Indians were for transforming the existing system of Government only by peaceful and legitimate methods and therefore nothing should be done which would interfere in this, their noble task. He regretted he could not support the motion of Mr. Crerar.

Sir D. P. SARVADHIKARI in a lengthy speech opposed the consideration of the Bill. He analysed the Ordinance in great detail and said it was difficult to consider a measure of this character. He did not think that such an emergency had arisen to warrant a measure of this description. Materials had not been placed before this Council to prove the necessity for the promulgation of the Ordinance and much less for the inclusion of some provisions of the Bill, especially the removal of the right of Habeas Corpus. He was prepared to admit that there were revolutionary criminals in Bengal; but he was not prepared to admit that there was a revolutionary movement for the furtherance of political wants and aspirations. Sir D. P. Sarvadhikari then examined the Ordinance from the legal and constitutional aspect and complained that it has been brought before the House for consideration. Sir. P. C. Mitter, who was a party to the framing of the Rowlett report, was opposed to the Ordinance Bill. He (the speaker) asked what was the necessity for providing for the removal of prisoners to other province, when there were endless number of jails within Bengal. He severely criticised the removal of the right of Habeas Corpus and said in the face of this provision he could not consider the right of appeal to the High Court as any very much hopeful provision. In conclusion he opposed the consideration of the Bill.

Mr. VEDAMURTHI regretted that owing to his ill-health he was not able to take an active part in this session, but his ill-health could not prevent him from recording his protest against the introduction of the Bill. He was entirely opposed to the principles that underlay the Bill, and the policy enunciated in it. He held that the suspension of Habeas Corpus was a very extraordinary procedure which deprived a citizen of his most cherished right. Proceeding Mr. Vedomurthi said that there was an impression in the country that the Council of State was a handmaid of the Government of India and that it existed in the constitution only to register the decrees of the Government. Even this Council to-day was offered an ultimatum in the shape of not only a recommended Bill, but of a certified Bill by the Governor-General. It was an insult to the House to be called upon to pass the Bill at the point of the bayonet. It was a sheer waste of time to discuss the Bill as the Government had come with the determination of not being convinced. Their discussion and adverse vote would not make the Government deviate even by a hair's breadth from the course they had chalked out for themselves. The discussion would only be a farce. He felt that he could not therefore be party to the passing of the Bill and he declared that, to emphasise his protest against the Bill, he would withdraw from the House when the Bill was under discussion.

After his speech Mr. Vedomurthi bundled up his papers and walked out of the Chamber with a bow to the chair.

Mr. KARANDIKAR opposed the consideration of the Bill. He said that the whole affair betrayed lack of trust by the Government for the people of Bengal and also for their own judiciary. He saw no justification for the Government to deprive their judiciary of its powers. He referred to the Bengal Bill before the local Council of Bengal and how it was opposed by prominent public men of that province. He then criticised the Bill under discussion in detail and said that High Courts should not be deprived of their powers. No case had been made out for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

Lala Sukhbir SINHA also opposed the consideration of the Bill. He averred that he was not for any revolution in the country. Men of position and property wanted protection of life and property. It was a pity that in recommending this Bill the Governor-General had taken the entire responsibility for the passage of the Bill on himself. He had forgotten that the members of this House had some responsibility in the administration of the country. In regard to the promulgation of the Ordinance he did not consult the Central Legislature. There the matter rested and the responsibility rested with the Governor-General. What was the use of this Council now discussing this Bill when it had been certified? Therefore he thought that they should not consider the Bill on its merits, but leave it to the Government to do what they thought best for the country.

The Raja of DIGHAPATHIA (Bengal) regretted that he was unable to support the Bill. He feared this Bill would not have the desired effect but might have the opposite effect. There was nothing but martial law in Bengal and any man could at any time be arrested by the Police without any warrant. It was not right to punish the whole province of Bengal for the crimes of a few. Already ninety persons had been arrested and detained for several months. The appointment of Commissioners was a mere eye-wash. Moreover it was difficult to understand the necessity for a provision enabling the Government to transfer the prisoners from Bengal to jails outside Bengal. This would create unnecessary hardship to the prisoners. Concluding the Raja said he had received several communications from several associations in Bengal asking him to emphatically protest against this Bill.

Syed RAZA ALI said the right of appeal given to the accused dwindled into insignificance before the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act contained in Clause VI. The implication of this clause was very serious. A man could be detained for any length of time without information against him being put to the judicial scrutiny. The Repressive Laws Committee had clearly laid down that restraining the personal liberty without trial of any subject was inconsistent with the recent constitutional changes and therefore the committee recommended that to be repealed. Section 491 of the Criminal Procedure Code expressly exempted action under the Bengal Regulation from liability to a writ of Habeas Corpus, because the Government had declared that their policy was to confine their operation of the regulation within the strict limits proposed by the Repressive Laws Committee, that is, to be used only in the Frontier and backward tracts and not to be used in cases of internal commotion. But the Police of Bengal had been given extraordinary powers to arrest any person without warrant. The very fact that these measures were necessary showed that the Bengal Police was not so efficient as it ought to be. He, for one, would not give a *carte blanche* to the Bengal Government to order the Police to do things as they liked. He feared that under the Act a Police constable was a mightier individual than Sir Alexander Muddiman and Mr. Crerar. (Laughter.)

Mr. V. RAMDAS (Swarajist) said that two years ago this Council was invited to co-operate with the Government in taxing the poor man by doubling his salt tax and the members very obligingly accepted the invitation of the Government. To-day they were invited once more to accede to the Viceroy's view that this Black Bill was essential for the good of India. He declined to accept that invitation. Their co-operation was only wanted when something extraordinary was required to be done against the wishes of the whole country and of the Assembly. As to the utility of discussion and debate he argued that the representatives of Bengal and of India had unhesitatingly and in no uncertain terms condemned this Black Bill. After the rejection of three clauses of this measure in its present obnoxious form, they could not reject the Bill, nor could they allow it to become law. He held therefore that there was no use of discussing and debating the clause of the Bill. Similarly it was no use to convince the bureaucracy who were the steel frame of the Indian constitution and who were not liable to change its views. He emphatically entered his protest against the misuse of Section 67-B of the Government of India Act. Concluding, the speaker felt that without doing any injustice to his electorate and without failing to discharge his functions, he must withdraw from the deliberation of the Council so far as the debate of this Bill was concerned.

After Mr. Ramdas had concluded his speech, he walked out of the Chamber.

After Mr. Ramdas has left the Chamber in protest against the passing of the Bill, Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN addressed the Council. He said that in bringing the Bill in the recommended form, there was no intention of treating this House in any other way than with the greatest respect. He had for sometime enjoyed the honour of presiding over the deliberations of the Council of State and he would do nothing to lower the dignity and the great reputation which this Council enjoyed in India. It had been suggested that the Bill had been brought forward at the end of the session. That was not the fault of the Government. They had to lay the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act itself before the two houses of Parliament for eight working days, and the Act itself received the sanction of His Majesty only on the 18th March. No surprise was sprung on this Council as had been alleged by some members, because this had been before the Councillors since last Friday. Regarding the necessity for the Act itself Sir Alexander Muddiman said, that the fact of a very serious terrorist conspiracy making the life of the man in the street intolerable, was admitted. The ordinary law had broken down. Juries had failed in their duty. The witnesses were intimidated and Bengal was sliding slowly towards that state which filled everyone in Bengal with sorrow, with horror some years ago. It had been argued that the action taken by the Government was not the right one, but no one had suggested any alternative. The Raja of Digapathia had stated that the situation in Bengal was something like the Martial Law regime, but under the Martial Law, the suspected person could be shot. Did they want it in Bengal?

Concluding, the Home Member appealed to the Council to shoulder some part of the responsibility which attaches to the maintenance of law and order in India. It had been a charge repeated by those opposed to reforms in India that the legislatures did not favour any action taken by the Government for the maintenance of law and order. He did not suggest that this House should blindly without consideration endorse all that had been proposed. It was a matter on which the Members must examine their own conscience very closely, and see whether they were justified in refusing that support to the Government which it was the right of the Government to look for from the Central Legislature, and the House in particular.

Mr. CRERAR emphasised that there was a revolutionary conspiracy very well organised and sustained. In support of this statement he pointed out that there had been large importation of ammunitions which could not be obtained by any legitimate means. Then there was distribution of a very large number of revolutionary publications, and thirdly there was manufacture of a highly efficient type of bomb. The object of these revolutionary organisations was the overthrow of the Government established in India by force and subvert the social organism which was the primary duty of the Government to support.

Mr. Crerar's motion that the Bill be taken into consideration was put to vote and carried by 29 votes to 3.

The 3 members were Messrs. K. V. Rangaswamy Iyengar, R. P. Karandikar and Sukhbir Sinha. The 29 members were Sir Narasimha Saibaba, Sir Mohamed Habibullah, Mr. Abbott, Sir Charles Mewatt, Mr. Berthoud, Mr. Zahirudin, Mr. Dawn, Mr. Chaowick, Mr. McWatters, Mr. Crerar, Mr. Ley, Col. Patterson, Dewan Tekchand, Sir Umar Hayat Khan, Sardar Charanjit Singh, Nawab of Loharu, Mr. Shyam, B. Misra, Mr. K. N. Mitter, Mr. Wild, Raja of Dumraon, Major Akbar Khan of Hoti, Mr. Dutt, Mr. Natesan, Mr. Khaparde, Sir D. P. Sarbadhikari, Raja Digapathia, Mr. Raza Ali, Mr. D. C. Barua, and Khan Sahib Amanali.

After launch, that is, after Mr. Raza Ali's speech, the first three clauses were passed without any discussion. A short discussion ensued on Clause IV which authorises the Government to order custody of prisoners in jails outside Bengal, but this clause too was passed without any slight opposition.

The last clause, that is, suspension of Habeas Corpus Act, was opposed by Mr. Raza Ali and Dr. Sarbadhikari, but the Home Member emphasised that they could not have revision of the grounds of action by a Judicial Tribunal when ex-hypothesi they were enacting a law in which they could not disclose the sources of information. The clause was put to vote and a few members said 'No', but no member claimed division when the Bill (as recommended by the Governor-General) was put to vote and carried. Here again a few members said, 'No', but did not claim division.

The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

The Autumn Session

SIMLA—25TH AUGUST 1925.

The Autumn Session of the Council of State commenced on the 25TH AUGUST in the Council Chamber at the Viceregal Lodge. Feeling references were made to the deaths of Lord Rawlinson, Mr. C. R. Das and Sir Surendranath Banerjea.

A resolution moved by Mr. Khaparde for an enquiry into the condition of the piece-workers in Government presses was rejected.

A resolution of Sir D. P. Sarbadhikari for a delegation of a few elected members to form the nucleus of a convention to draft a constitution for British India was postponed, as the Government motion on the Muddiman Report was going to be placed shortly before the House.

On the 26TH AUGUST Six Government Bills were introduced in the Council of State without discussion. These included a Bill to supplement the Oudh Courts Act, 1925, a Bill to amend the Criminal Tribes Act, and a Bill to amend the Cotton Transport Act, 1923. By the latter Bill Local Governments were given some discretion in the matter of restricting the import of cotton in any protected area.

Sir Narasimha Sarma introduced a Bill making very minor alterations in the Trusts Act, 1882; Electricity Act, 1910; Mines Act, 1928; Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923; Civil Procedure Code Amendment Act, 1923; High Courts Jurisdiction Act, 1872; and the Criminal Procedure Code, 1892; and repealing the Burma Laws Act, 1898.

A Bill was then introduced supplementing certain provisions of the Madras, Bombay and Bengal Children Acts, which contain provisions affecting the appellate and revisional jurisdiction of the respective High Courts. It was held that such provisions are ultra vires of the local Legislature. Hence this validating measure. The last Bill introduced was one to amend the Ports Acts, 1908, by which the Government of India was empowered by notification to exempt, from the operation of Section 31 for any port, sailing vessels below a specified tonnage.

The Oudh Court Bill.

On the 31ST AUGUST, on the motion of Mr. CRERAR the Bill to supplement the Oudh Courts Act, 1925, was taken into consideration. Dr. Dwarkanath Mitter moved a series of amendments for the addition of the words "or Chief Court" after the words "High Court" in several clauses of the schedule to the Bill. He pointed out that without such additions the position was not clear, especially in regard to the rule-making powers of High Courts.

Sir Narasimha SARMA said that the Government of India had followed exactly those sections which had been referred to in the Oudh Courts Act. The High Courts, constituted under the Government of India Act and the Chief Court of Oudh, would have to appoint a rule-making committee and would have to take the committee's report into consideration before the rules were framed, whereas in the case of other Courts the constitution of a committee was not compulsory before the rules were made. Moreover, the expression includes a Chief Court under the General High Court Clauses Act.

Syed RAZA ALI, on behalf of the people of Oudh, expressed gratitude to the Government for establishing a Chief Court for Oudh. He looked forward to a time when the Chief Court would be raised to the status of a chartered High Court at Lucknow, the jurisdiction including some western districts of Agra Province. The Bill was then passed.

The Council next passed without discussion the Criminal Tribes Act (Amendment) Bill, the Cotton Transport Act (Amendment) Bill, the Bill amending certain minor enactments and repealing certain others, the Bill supplementing certain provisions of the Madras, Bengal and Bombay Children Acts and the Bill amending the Port Act of 1908.

The Opium Evil.

On the 1ST SEPTEMBER Sir Devaprasad SARBADHIKARI proposed that the area for the cultivation of opium be restricted and brought under stricter control, and the practice of making advances to cultivators discontinued from next season.

Mr. McWATTERS said that in seven years the area of cultivation had been reduced from 200,000 acres to 116,000 and the Government had arranged to reduce cultivation next year to 74,000 acres. The Government were considering the question of concentrating cultivation in certain areas in order to bring it under stricter control. Moreover, the rate of payment to the cultivator had been reduced from Rs. 15 to Rs. 13 per seer. The average revenue from opium had been also reduced from Rs 8 crores to Rs. 114 lakhs. Export was allowed only under the licence system. Export would be stopped to those countries where opium found its way into illicit channels. He announced that an independent committee of the League of Nations would visit India and the Government would allow them to examine their system. The age-long practice of making advances to cultivators must continue, as otherwise the cultivators would be in danger of getting into the hands of money-lenders.

A suggestion for the adjournment of the discussion till next session was negatived. The first part of the resolution suggesting restriction of the area of cultivation was lost by 29 votes to 11, while the other part was rejected.

Mr. Yamin Khan next introduced a Bill to amend the Interest Act, which aimed at preventing the accumulation of interest.

On the 2ND SEPTEMBER Sir Henry MONCRIEFF SMITH, as President of the Statute Law Revision Committee and Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Bill to consolidate the law applicable to intestate and testamentary succession, moved for consideration of the Bill as it emerged from the Joint Committee.

Sir Henry said: The Bill, introduced two year ago by Sir Alexander Muddiman, purported to be a measure of consolidation. The Bill now before the Council had brought together all scattered law on the subject of intestate and testamentary succession and a large number of textual amendments had been made which were merely of a drafting nature. The Bill was passed.

Repeal of Repressive Laws.

On the 3RD SEPTEMBER a heated debate was held in the Council of State on the motion of Mr. RAMDAS, Swarajist, for consideration of Mr. Patel's Bill passed in the Legislative Assembly last March repealing five special enactments, including the Bengal and Madras Regulations and the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act.

An attempt by Dr. Dwarkanath Mitter for reference of the Bill to the Select Committee was also opposed as the Government would not commit itself to the principle of repeal when the ordinary law was not sufficient to deal with offences against the State.

Non-officials, including Sir Devaprasad Sarbadbhikari and Mr. K. C. Roy, emphasised that the Assembly had carried the Bill as a party measure, designed to create a political effect, and no detailed consideration had been given to the recommendations of the Repressive Laws Committee. By

agreeing to the Committee stage the Bill could be shaped in acceptable form, and the powers necessary for the Government to deal with dangerous offences against the State would be maintained.

The motion for a Select Committee was lost by 30 votes to 13.

In the discussion for consideration of the Bill a large number of speakers participated. Mr. RAMDAS, relying on statements in the Sapru Committee's report, pleaded for repeal of all five enactments, some of which, he alleged, were being applied by the Government for the suppression of all forms of political agitation.

Syed RAZA ALI, who remained neutral, justified his action by stating that while on the one hand Mr. Ramdas wanted a repeal of all five enactments, the Government, on the other, opposed even a Committee for consideration.

Sir Maneckjee DADABHOY opposed the Bill as a repeal of the enactments would result in anarchy, bloodshed and riots in the country, thereby impeding industrial, agricultural and commercial progress.

Messrs. Karandikar and Khaparde, supporting the Bill, pointed out that repeal of the enactments would not weaken the hands of the Government, as the Governor-General could promulgate ordinances in 24 hours whenever an emergency arose.

Mr. CRERAR, Home Secretary, opposed the motion. While he acknowledged Mr. Ramdas's moderation he did not agree that the Bill was moderate. The Bill before the House did not contain the enactments which were included in it when the original Bill was before the Assembly. The Assembly removed the Punjab Murderous Outrages Act from among the proposed measures for repeal and there was partial mitigation of the original Bill in so far as it affected the Moplah Outrages Act, but Mr. Patel had told the Assembly that he would introduce another Bill for the repeal of these two as well. In so far as the laws mentioned in the present Bill were concerned, they undoubtedly conferred upon the Government the power of committing to custody without a regular form of judicial trial. Mr. Crerar shared repugnance in the feature of the laws in question, but it was only hard necessity which compelled the Government to retain them on the statute book. The Repressive Laws Committee's report should be taken as a whole.

The Committee were themselves very much impressed by apprehensions of the future and, indeed, the ink was hardly dry when they had the Moplah rebellion, which was followed by a recrudescence of revolutionary activities in Bengal and the discovery of a Communist conspiracy in India. The judgment of the High Court in the Cawnpore Conspiracy case would reveal that the dangerous Communist conspiracy was not a thing of bureaucratic imagination. It had been alleged that these measures were archaic, antiquated and obsolete. They were not more archaic than revolution, not more antiquated than conspiracy and not more obsolete than assassination.

Retention of these laws was due to a very real danger. Persistent attempts had been made from foreign sources to introduce in India propaganda against India's peace and security as a whole and not merely on the frontiers. There was subversive propaganda in the form of incitements to murder and rebellion and in the concrete form of illicit arms and ammunition. That was a danger which could not be lightly diminished, especially when they referred to the case of China where the trouble was due to Communist activities. Mr. Crerar added :—"The Government of India have documentary proof to show that attempts have been made and are being made by Communist elements in China to secure connection with India."

Proceeding, the Home Secretary asked the House to consider the international obligations of the British Government in India with regard to its own undesirables, that is, those persons, like Indian Communist agents who were very recently in Germany. The German Government had applied to the Government of India to receive those agents on the ground that their activities were dangerous to the German State. The Government of India were bound to receive these agents back to Indian shores, but could the Government allow them to carry on their propaganda.

Concluding, Mr. Crerar said the real object of the Bill was not to improve the statute book but to impair the Government's power and weaken their responsibility. The obligations of the Government must be accepted and vindicated. No honest Government whether in its own interest and of the peoples committed to its charge or in the interests of its successors in title and liability can possibly be met with an aggression of this character and omit to repel it by every means in its power.

The motion for consideration of the Bill was put and lost, 9 voting for and 29 against it,

Mr. Phiroze C. SETHNA introduced his Bill to amend the Transfer of Property Act 1882. The object of the Bill was to amend Section 123 by providing an exception clause dealing with gifts.

On the 7TH SEPTEMBER the business of the Council of State was purely official and lasted only half an hour. After interpellations, Mr. Crerar moved for consideration of the Civil Procedure Amendment Code Bill 1908. There was no discussion and the Bill was passed. Similarly the Council agreed to the passage of the Bill to amend the Religious Endowments Act, 1863, which was brought forward in consequence of the recommendation of the Civil Justice Committee.

Mr. McWATTERS, in moving for consideration of the Bill amending the law relating to salt and salt revenue, said that its object was to bring under direct control of the Central Government the administration of salt in the Madras and Bombay presidencies. Apart from affording administrative convenience the Bill was in strict accordance with the spirit of the Reformed Constitution. The Council again without discussion passed this Bill.

The Bill conferring certain exemptions on members of legislative bodies was then taken into consideration by the Council at the instance of Mr. Crerar and passed, as was also the Sikh Gurdwara Act Supplementary Bill.

Indianisation of High Commissioners Office.

On the 8TH SEPTEMBER Mr. Sethna moved that steps be taken to Indianise the staff and establishment of the High Commissioner in London.

The debate lasted more than two hours and the motion was carried, with an amendment by Sir Maneckjee Dadaboy suggesting that Indianisation must be carried out as far as is compatible with economy and efficiency, and must take place among the higher staff and establishment.

Transfer of Property Act.

Mr. SETHNA, in moving for consideration of his Bill to amend the Transfer of Property Act, said the object was to clear the doubt that at present existed whether assignments without consideration of certain actionable claims—those, for example, which consisted in life-policies, were governed by Section 123 or by Section 130 of the Act. It stood to reason that when a man assigned his life insurance policy to his wife, or other relative, a mere written instrument ought to suffice, and that he should not be put to the trouble and expense of getting the instrument registered. But Section 123 was capable of an interpretation by which registration

might be made compulsory, though unnecessarily, in the case of written instruments transferring without consideration actionable claims. This inconsistency might be removed by adding an exception to Section 123.

At the instance of Mr. Chadwick certain drafting amendments to give effect to the intentions of the mover were made and the Bill as amended was passed.

Women's Franchise Rules.

On the 9TH SEPTEMBER Mr. CRERAR, in asking the acceptance of the Council of State to amendments being made in the electoral rules as recommended by the Majority Report of the Muddiman Committee explained the history of the case by quoting recommendations of the Joint Select Committee. These recommendations referred only to franchise, that is, to the admission of women to electoral rolls as voters. There was no reference to their standing as candidates either for local Councils or to the Central Legislature. The Joint Select Committee expressly contemplated that the initiative in this matter must come from the Legislatures. The electoral rules provide that on a resolution passed by the Council recommending sex disqualification for registration to be removed in respect of women the Government should make regulations accordingly. In so far as admission of women to the franchise to vote was concerned no further amendment of the electoral rules than contemplated in the present resolution, either in the case of Provincial Councils or in the case of the Central Legislature was necessary. If the disqualification in respect of standing as a candidate for the Council of State was proposed to be removed then there should be a specific and separate resolution and the Provincial Councils must also pass similar concurrent resolutions. So far Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces and Bengal had passed such resolutions and Burma stood on a different footing. If a resolution to remove that disqualification was actually passed in this Council then it would apply in the case of these Provinces and would not apply to the other Provinces unless and until the Councils in those Provinces also passed similar resolutions. The question was whether the Council endorsed the recommendations of the Reforms Enquiry Committee that the electoral rules should be amended in such manner that if this Council subsequently passed a resolution removing the restrictions regarding standing as candidates and if the necessary concurrent resolutions were obtained in the local legislatures then disqualification could be removed.

The resolution was subsequently carried.

Bounty for Steel Industry.

The Council then discussed a Government resolution proposing payment of a bounty to the steel industry up to Rs. 60 lakhs for 18 months from the 1st October, 1925, to the 31st March, 1927, the bounty being at the rate of Rs. 12 per ton.

Mr. Chadwick said the case for a bounty rested on three-fifths of the quantity produced by the industry and pointed out that if Rs. 60 lakhs were granted it would considerably help the industry to establish itself. At the same time there was need for a reduction of the works cost and if the Government's anticipations proved true the Tata Company would earn a profit very soon.

Non-official members gave general support to the resolution which was eventually carried.

Indians in South Africa.

On the 10TH SEPTEMBER the position of Indians in South Africa, with particular reference to the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration Bill, at that time on the anvil of the South African Parliament, was discussed in the Council of State on the motion of Sir

Devaprasad Sarbadhikari, who urged immediate steps to secure and safeguard the rights of Indians.

Mr. Natesan and Mr. Ramdas Pantulu described the Bill before the South African Parliament as a direct violation of the Smuts-Gandhi agreement, and, if passed, the rights and privileges of Indians both born and domiciled there, would be taken away. Mr. Karandikar said the prestige of the British Empire was involved. Sir Umar Hayat Khan suggested repatriation if the problem could not be solved otherwise.

Mr. K. C. Roy strongly supported the proposal for a round-table conference, first suggested by Mr. Thomson (ex-Colonial Secretary) and said there was a clear case for intervention by His Majesty's Government so that there could be a solution, not in the interests of Indians alone, nor in the interests of South Africa alone, but in the bigger interests of the British Empire.

Mian Sir Fazl-i-Hussain accepted the motion and said that although the position was delicate, because South Africa was a self-governing Dominion, yet the door for negotiation was not still closed. When the Indian Government were negotiating for a round-table conference a bombshell, in the form of the Reservation of Areas Bill, was introduced in the South African Parliament. The Standing Emigration Committee, as well as Sir Devaprasad Sarbadhikari and Messrs. Motilal Nehru and Jinnah were of opinion that the Indian Government should use its good offices for a better understanding between India and South Africa and not for the intervention of higher authorities in the internal affairs of South Africa. The Government of India had already expressed disapproval of the Bill to the South African Government, and would follow it up with a detailed representation. The Government would try to secure justice and fair play, and not concessions.

Age of Consent Bill.

The Council next passed the Age of Consent Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly with a minor amendment. There was a heated debate on the proposed age-limit in the case of marital relations, but it was accepted by a majority.

The Reforms Enquiry Committee Report.

On the 11TH SEPTEMBER the Muddiman Report came up for discussion in the Council of State. Mr. CRERAR, Home Secretary, in moving the Government resolution for acceptance of the Majority Report asked the Council to see the problem in its true perspective not only of dimension, but of time. From the amendments to the resolution on the agenda it was clear that the leaders of all political thought in India had themselves definitely declared that the political progress of India must proceed on and be governed by these principles, but the Council must recognise the vast dimensions of the common enterprise. Durable institutions were of slow growth. He was not suggesting that India must wait for centuries to achieve her goal, but he pointed out that the inception of responsible government in India was not yet six years old.

There were legal and constitutional conditions inherent in the task itself. The first of these was sufficiently recited in the preamble to the Government of India Act, which states the fundamental doctrine of the responsibility of Parliament and that the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament. All responsible public opinion, however divergent in other matters, was agreed or, at least, was prepared to accept it as the basis of all practical discussion. "We must satisfy Parliament," said Mr. Crerar. "We must satisfy the tribunal that Parliament is to set up to examine and report on all claims and all evidence of every step that we propose should

be taken. We must use to the full all the resources in our possession, discarding none till its utility has been fully tried and found wanting. The co-operation invited and required by the Secretary of State and the Viceroy is not merely a stipulation made by one party to the negotiation, but a plain and candid statement of a fundamental condition for the solution of the problem which lies before us both, and without which neither can succeed. I, therefore, invite the Council to consider the resolution in this spirit."

Mr. SETHNA then moved his amendment, which was substantially the same as Pandit Motilal Nehru's amendment in the Assembly.

Mr. RAMDAS said his amendment was also on the lines of Mr. Sethna's amendment. He felt that the Government had no legal or moral right to continue to keep India as a dependency.

Sir Devaprasad SARBADHIKARI then moved his amendment suggesting a convention and otherwise materially covering the ground of Mr. Sethna's amendment.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN expressed disappointment at Mr. Sethna's speech. He regretted the reflection cast on the Maharaja of Burdwan who was one of the biggest zemindars in Bengal and had therefore as great a stake in the country as Mr. Sethna. He particularly regretted the prejudices against Indians who had been in the service of the Crown. If that was to continue India would not be as well served as in the past. The Minority Report had made only one recommendation, that the Constitution be ended and another Constitution be suggested by a Royal Commission. This House consisted of practical men, to whom he appealed to take a practical view of the situation.

Sir Maneckjee DADABHOY supported the Majority Report of the Muddiman Committee and regretted that he could not agree with the amendments of either Mr. Sethna or Sir Devaprasad Sarbadhikari. He did not want to discuss whether the majority was really a minority, but he accepted what was practicable and attainable, and not what was chimerical. The proposals of the Minority Report went beyond the scope and purpose of the Act, as their ultimate recommendation was the appointment of a Royal Commission. It was surprising that two signatories to the Minority Report should have supported the amendment of Pundit Motilal Nehru, because the proposals contained therein were matters for separate consideration and were irrelevant as amendments to the Government resolution, which had reference only to improvements in the Government machinery by rule-making powers. These amendments could not be moved constitutionally in the face of the preamble to the Act. The amendment asked for immediate full responsible Government, if not Dominion Government. Was it right or within the power of the Council of State to come forward with a catalogue of these formidable demands and ask by a stroke of the pen that the present Constitution should be set aside, and that a new Constitution should be given? Even the authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report did not contemplate such a demand. Concluding, Sir Maneckjee said: I have a large stake in the prosperity of this country. I yield to none, not even to Mr. Ramdas, in my love of country, but I believe that the policy adopted in these amendments, which are intended to defeat the main resolution of Mr. Crerar, is unwise and short-sighted.

Sir William CURRIE said that the business communities wanted the politicians to inspire confidence in their sense of responsibility. Businessmen wanted peace and quiet to carry on their avocations. If politicians could prove within the next two years their real desire to co-operate and that the minority would be protected and that business could carry on

peacefully, then Indian's political aspirations would not be opposed by the European commercial community.

Mr. KARANDIKAR said the difference between the Majority and the Minority lay in that one depended on the preamble while the other on the right of India to determine the stages of her advance by herself. Why should the amendment frighten Parliament out of its wits? It was put forward loyally in the interests of Great Britain and of greater India.

Dr. Dwarkanath MITTER disagreed with Sir Maneckjee Dadabhoy that the amendment offered an ultimatum. He however believed that as destiny had placed them under British rule they must accept the position in the preamble and depend upon the good wishes of Parliament for a future advance.

After a few more speeches the Council adjourned for the next day.

On the 12TH SEPTEMBER the Council of State concluded the debate on the Muddiman Committee Report.

Mr. K. C. ROY moved the addition of the following rider to Mr. Crerar's resolution :—" And that he do consider and recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission, or any other suitable agency, not later than 1927." Mr. Roy said that several members of the Assembly, particularly Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, had urged the appointment specifically of a Royal Commission. The Home Member admitted the day before that if co-operation was forthcoming, there was no reason why the Commission should not be appointed earlier than 1929. Sir Basil Blackett had also, in another place, indicated the same view. Mr. Roy believed that co-operation was forthcoming, and that the Swarajists were doing useful work as members of the various committees and in the Assembly. Acceptance of the proposal would mean a great gesture on the part of His Majesty's Government, and he appealed to the Home Secretary to accept his amendment on behalf of the Government and thereby record the necessary gesture.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN, in opposing the amendment congratulated Mr. K. C. Roy on his wise speech. The date of the Royal Commission, he said, was not so important as what the Commission was to go into. That material was not available now. What was required was not the capacity of the electorates alone, tried even thrice, but the sense of responsibility shown by the members of all legislative bodies sent up by the electorates in working the existing machinery. As Lord Birkenhead had clearly pointed out, there must be evidence of a genuine desire to co-operate with the Government in making the best of the existing Constitution. No doubt the Council of State had co-operated, but the co-operation received in other quarters was not encouraging, especially in Bengal and the Central Provinces Legislative Council, where there was no attempt to work the Reforms granted by the Government of India Act. The test for an acceleration of constitutional progress must be facts; and the Government could not now commit itself to any date named in the amendment. The popular leaders should endeavour to bring the Royal Commission earlier by earnestly working the present Act fully and producing convincing material.

Sir Devaprasad SARBADHIKARI opposed the amendment because it implied acceptance of the preamble. Reference had been made to the necessity of working the present machinery fully, but there was a great divergence of opinion about the possibility of working Dyarchy.

Mr. K. V. Rangaswami IYENGAR also opposed the amendment because no Royal Commission was needed to find out what India wanted. India's demands had been repeatedly put forward and were already well known.

Mr. ROY withdrew, his purpose in eliciting the opinion of the House on the subject having been served.

Syed RAZA ALI moved a rider proposing that the Government should also take into careful consideration the recommendations contained in the Minority Report. He recalled that Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, as a Minister in the Punjab, had asked for the unitary system of government in the Provinces by the abolition of Dyarchy and partial responsibility in the Central Government. This showed the Indian view. Mr. Raza Ali however felt that both the Majority and the Minority had put their cases very well. The communal question was partly dealt with by the reports. He emphatically stated that the allegation that the Government was responsible for or promoted communal differences was entirely without foundation. Appeals had been made by the Government for co-operation and goodwill. Had not the Council of State supported the Government in the maintenance of law and order throughout? Had they not come to the help of the Government when the Assembly had rejected the Princes' Protection Bill, the Finance Bills of 1923 and 1924 and even the Special Laws Repeal Bill?

Mr. CRERAR regretted he could not accept the amendment, although he appreciated the courtesy of the observations made by Mr. Raza Ali. In a very few cases the majority went beyond the minority, and in others the minority went beyond the majority. The difference between the majority and the minority was largely one of method and expediency. Syed Raza Ali, in the first part of his amendment, wanted the Government to give effect to all the Majority recommendations. The Government would do this as they had been endeavouring to do, but it was difficult for the Government to accept the Minority Report, because the recommendations of the Minority had not been correctly understood. For, while accepting the recommendations of the Majority Report, the Minority, at the same time, stated that there could be no improvement without an enquiry by a Royal Commission. The Government could not commit themselves to the actual implications of this amendment, although the Government had every desire to show a spirit of reciprocity and good-will to the Council for the assistance it had rendered. The Government rejoiced that wise counsels had prevailed in the House and would rejoice still further if they prevailed still more by accepting the Government resolution as it was.

Mr. RAMDASS welcomed the amendment because it had given an opportunity for the Government to refuse Mr. Raza Ali's offer of co-operation except on its own terms. The attitude of the Government had shown to the Council of State that the co-operation which the Government often talked about was to be all one-sided.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN, replying, noted Mr. Ramdas's confession. The latter had supported neither the Majority nor the Minority. If Dyarchy had promoted communal differences, then it had brought the people to a sense of the realities of the situation. What was the cause of communal differences? The cause was that the power of the vote was being realised, and that the loaves and fishes of office were being divided and the people were getting familiar with hard facts. It was not by controversy, and not by speeches that these matters were brought to their notice, but by the hard logic of facts.

Mr. Raza Ali's amendment was rejected by 28 votes to 7. Mr. Crerar's resolution was then put and was carried by 28 votes to 7.

On the 14TH SEPTEMBER the Council of State dealt with official business. The Bill to amend the law relating to the carriage of goods by sea was passed. Mr. Chadwick briefly explained minor changes. He characterized the Bill as useful and said it was passed unanimously by the Assembly.

The Council then passed without discussion the Provident Fund (Amendment) Bill and the Opium Bill as passed by the Assembly.

The Coal Grading Bill.

Mr. CHADWICK next moved for the consideration of the Coal Grading Bill as passed by the Assembly.

Sir Maneckjee DADABHOY welcomed the Bill. The coal trade, he said, had been in five years. It was a matter of controversy now whether the Government were justified in putting an embargo on the coal trade. It was regarded by many that it ruined the trade. Coal was the basis of all industries in India and he congratulated the Government on their undertaking the proposed legislation. The Bill followed the provisions of the South African and Australian Coal Acts.

Sir Devaprasad SARBADHIKARI observed that railway freights made it impossible for Indian coal to compete successfully with foreign coal even in India. He asked for a fresh assurance from the Govt. that the larger question of the coal trade would be referred to the Tariff Board at an early date.

Mr. CHADWICK, replying, thanked the Council for their support. The measure dealt with one section of the coal trade only and that was the question of the export trade. He repeated the assurance given by Sir Charles Innes in the Assembly that the question of the coal trade would be referred to the Tariff Board at the earliest opportunity, but as whatever the Tariff Board recommended would have nothing to do with the question of the export trade, he asked the House to pass the Bill.

After a minor drafting amendment moved by him had been accepted, the Bill, as amended, was passed.

On the 15TH SEPTEMBER Lala RAMSARANDAS'S resolution suggesting a special concession on coal freights in the case of journeys of 500 miles and above was carried by the House. The Government opposed the resolution, but did not challenge a division.

Use of Fire-arms.

Mr. V. RAMDASS moved for consideration of Mr. Rangachariar's Bill passed in the Assembly on the 9th September, providing that when fire-arms are used for dispersing an assembly, preliminary warning should in certain circumstances be given. Mr. Ramdass asked the House to remember that authors of this measure were not wicked Swarajists like himself—(laughter)—but Mr. Sastri and Mr. Rangachariar who could not be said to have been actuated by any desire to weaken the hands of the Government. He was aware that the Government would not allow its officers to inflict any more injury than was necessary, or to destroy human life, except to the extent that was absolutely necessary to avoid a greater danger to the community, but public feeling was strongly for the Bill. Mr. Ramdass explained the necessity of every section being included in the Bill in order to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, to protect innocent victims against the unlawful use of firearms.

Mr. CRERAR, while acknowledging Mr. Ramdas's persuasive eloquence, opposed the motion, although the Government was in full sympathy with the humane consideration involved. What was wanted in regard to any riot was prompt, resolute, cool, responsible and intelligent action of an officer, but the Bill interfered with an officer in all these respects. It had been pointed out that this Bill was framed on the lines of the English Law. Under the Law of England every citizen had a positive obligation of taking the necessary initiative in suppressing disorder. The English Law also laid down that any person who remained after a proclamation had been read by a magistrate was a felon. The present Bill did not protect the law-abiding citizens, it did not certainly protect the officers, but it protected the rioters. The effect of the Bill was that not only the initiative of the officers would be gone and they would be reduced to machines, but the

Police would be prevented from attacking in certain cases a gang of dacoits whom they had laboured hard to pursue. Then, under the Bill a report was essential and must be submitted to the Local Government within 24 hours. In cases of riot it generally took three or four days to ascertain the facts. Of what value would a report be if it was prepared within 24 hours? Moreover, the report was to be a public document and could be used against the officer who prepared it, because the last sub-clause allowed prosecution against the officer without the permission of the Local Government. Could any officer report fact which he knew would be used against himself in a criminal court? There was no equity nor reason in the last sub-clause. By such a provision officers would be deprived of a measure of protection which they now enjoyed. In India the position in this matter was very different from that in England. Riots took place in which communal passions were roused and popular passions were inflamed. These feelings took a long time to subside, and while that exacerbation of feeling continued, while the odium of having fired was still there, Mr. Ramdas proposed to expose the officer to prejudiced attacks of those who might find it convenient to take advantage of the situation in order to take some revenge. If the Bill was passed it would discourage those who were responsible for the maintenance of order and be a source of encouragement to those who were out to break the law.

Eventually, after a long debate, the motion for consideration was lost without being pressed to a division.

On the 16TH SEPTEMBER the Council of State held its last business sitting when official business was transacted.

Bamboo Paper Protection Bill.

Mr. CHADWICK, in moving for consideration of the Bamboo Paper Industry Protection Bill, said that had it not been for recent developments which were indicative of the great potentialities of the bamboo paper industry at a moderate cost this Bill would not have been brought forward. The results obtained by the Niabati Mill out of bamboo pulp were very striking and it was possible that India would not only in the near future be self-supporting, but also be in a position to export paper to other countries. At present unless the bamboo paper industry was protected it would fail under the stress of foreign competition. If the industry did not make a success of their process then nothing would prevent the Legislature and the Government from withdrawing the proposed protection. As regards super-calendered paper being exempted from the protective duty, the Government would, through the departmental committee, consult paper manufactures and newspaper representatives.

Sir Maneckjee DADABHOY supported the motion because, as a Protectionist, he was in sympathy with an industry which needed their special commiseration, not only because it helped them during the war but also because it was a means of spreading knowledge. He, however, wanted to know why the preamble referred to protection for the bamboo paper industry only while the tenour of Mr. Chadwick's speech indicated protection to all kinds of the paper industry. He also wanted to know what would be the difference between the present revenue under 15 per cent. ad-valorem and a specific duty of one anna per pound.

Sir Devaprasad SARBADHIKARI doubted whether the proposed protection would be adequate when compared with the possibility of foreign manufacturers reducing their prices in order to dump their goods. Sir Devaprasad put in a vigorous plea on behalf of the smaller newspaper, especially the Vernacular Press when the Govt. took into consideration the question of exempting from the protective duty super-calendered paper.

Mr. RAMDASS supporting consideration of the Bill pleaded for a loan or subsidy to the Carnatic Paper Mill at Rajamundry, which according to the Tariff Board, should receive help if the success of the soda process on a commercial scale was to be decided.

The Bill was then taken into consideration and passed without alteration.

Sir Narasimha SARMA asked for consideration of the Limitation Act (Amendment) Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly with the main object of extending the period of limitation in the case of certain suits from six months to one year. The Bill was considered and passed without alteration.

Standing Committees on Communal Legislation

Mr. CRERAR then moved : " This Council recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that in order to give effect to the recommendation in Para. 120 of the report of the Reforms Enquiry Committee, the Indian Legislative Rules and the Standing Orders of this House be amended so as to provide as follows ; (a) The standing committees, one to deal with Bill relating to Hindu Law and the other with Bills relating to Mahomedan Law, shall be appointed ; (b) appointments to these committees shall be made by a committee of selection, the members of which shall be appointed at one of the first meetings of the Council to be held in each year, and should hold office for one year from the date of nomination ; (c) the committee of selection shall consist of the President and the Leader of the House, supplemented up to a total number of six members on a motion moved by the Leader of the House so as to represent the main divisions of opinion in this House ; (d) the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Hindu Law shall consist of the Hon. the Home Member, the Hon. the Law Member (if they are members of the Council) and Hindu members, nominated by the committee of selection so as to include persons well versed in Hindu Law, and representatives both of the orthodox and reforming sections of the Hindu community ; (e) the constitution of the Standing Committee for Mahomedan Law shall be similar to that of the Committee on Hindu Law, except for the substitution of 10 Mahomedan members for 15 Hindu members ; (f) the members of each Standing Committee shall hold office for one year, but may be re-nominated by the committee of selection in successive years ; (g) a Bill which has been referred to the Standing Committee or a special Select Committee in the House shall not be referred to the Standing Committee or special Select Committee in the other House ; (h) as soon as leave is given to introduce a Bill other than a Government Bill, and subject to Para (g) as soon as a Bill other than a Government Bill which has been passed by the other House is laid on the table of this House, if the Bill is certified by the President to relate to Hindu or Mahomedan Law, it shall be referred to the Standing Committee concerned without further motion ; (i) The standing committee shall have power to examine witnesses and to circulate a Bill, but when it directs circulation the fact shall be reported to the Council ; (j) further procedure in the Council after report of the Standing Committee is received shall be the same as the procedure on receipt of the report of a Select Committee." The resolution was adopted.

Business having concluded the Council then adjourned till the next day, the 17TH SEPTEMBER, when H. E. the Viceroy addressed the Council and announced its dissolution.

Madras Legislative Council

MADRAS—3RD FEBRUARY 1925.

The election of the President of the Madras Legislative Council was held on the 3RD FEBRUARY when the Council assembled with a full attendance of members, Dewan Bahadur Swamikannu Pillay occupying the Chair. The first item on the agenda was the election of the President. Only two candidates stood for election, namely Dewan Bahadur Swamikannu Pillay and Rao Bahadur A. S. Krishna Rao.

After the President had announced the names of the candidates for election the House proceeded with the election which was done by ballot. Dewan Bahadur Swamikannu Pillay secured 64 votes and R. B. A. S. Krishna Rao 42. The election of Dewan Bahadur Swamikannu Pillay having received the approval of His Excellency the Governor Mr. Swamikannu Pillay assumed the Chair.

Judicial and Executive Functions.

On the 6TH FEBRUARY a resolution was moved urging the separation of Judicial and Executive functions with effect from the next official year. The Law Member pointed out that the matter was at present under the consideration of the Government of India and when their decisions were obtained the Local Government would give an opportunity to the Legislative Council to discuss the scheme. The resolution was thereupon withdrawn.

Revenue Collection in Tanjore.

The motion for the adjournment of the House to discuss the situation in Tanjore district owing to the collection of the enhanced rate of revenue was then discussed. Members from all sides of the House supported the motion, which on being put to the vote was carried.

The mover referred to the distress created by the recent floods in the district and the sorry plight of the ryots. He urged a reduction of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in revenue in the case of all lands and the stopping of revenue collections for two months till a careful investigation of the condition of the district had been made and the remission applications filed by the ryots had been disposed of.

On the 7TH FEBRUARY the Council voted a supplementary grant of Rs. 65,000 under the Excise Department, and Rs. 1,23,827 for grants to local bodies for the repair of damage to roads caused by the floods.

The Hon. Mr. C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, Law Member, presented the report of the Select Committee, on recommitment, on the Bill to amend and consolidate the Madras Civil Courts Act 1873, and moved that the Bill as now amended by the Committee be taken into consideration. The Bill after discussion was passed into law.

Among the non-official business transacted on this day was the discussion on the resolution of Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar recommending to the Government that at least 40 per cent. of the posts in both the lower and upper grades of the services under the Government be reserved for non-Brahmin Hindus, 10

per cent. for the depressed classes, 15 per cent. for Mahomedans, 10 per cent. for Indian Christians, 10 per cent. for Brahmins and the rest for representatives of other communities, and for recruitment by competitive examinations.

There were vehement speeches both in support of and against the resolution. The discussion was not closed when the Council adjourned till 2nd Mar.

The Financial Statement 1925-26.

On the 2ND MARCH, after interpellations, the Hon. Mr. R. A. Graham presented the Budget for 1925-26. In an introductory speech, he reviewed the position during the past two years, and pointed out how, after several years of deficit, it was possible for his predecessor to announce an estimated surplus of Rs. 11 lakhs at the close of 1923-24, but when the accounts of that year were finally made up, the position was found to be more favourable than had been anticipated, and the surplus amounted to Rs. 28½ lakhs, the whole of which was allocated to the repayment of the outstanding debt. The year 1924-25 started with the anticipation in that the revenue would exceed expenditure by Rs. 15'18 lakhs. Events belied the expectations formed one year ago. Unforeseen calamities, such as the occurrence of floods and the uncertain factors of excise revenue considerably affected receipts, leaving the estimated deficit at Rs. 32,36,500 at the close of 1924-25. The estimates of revenue for 1925-26 had been framed on a comparatively conservative basis, in view of the disappointment in the current year, the total result being an anticipated revenue of Rs. 16,51,79,100, or Rs. 20,72,000 more than the revised estimate for the current year, with an expenditure chargeable to revenue of Rs. 17,19,87,800 leaving a total uncovered revenue deficit of Rs. 88'03 lakhs.

Referring to the Transferred Departments, the Finance Member said that a total allotment of Rs. 24'66 lakhs had been made, of which Rs. 11'63 went to education. The Council might complain, he continued, in spite of the figures just given, that too little had been provided for nation-building. The Hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government would like to press on with the scheme for rural water supply and for the extension of medical aid. The Minister for Education felt that he had only made the first two steps towards universal education, and wanted to get on with the Andhra University, while the Development Minister had many proposals for the improvement of agriculture and the encouragement of industries. In fact, observed the Finance Member, even to finance the projects already embarked on there must be either additional taxation or retrenchment, which besides being unpopular, had already gone so far that if ingenuity could find further scope, it would be at the expense of efficiency. The only justification for the Budget lay in the hope of a diminution of contribution to the Government of India.

Referring to the proposed remission of Rs. 126 lakhs, he said they might combine thankfulness and congratulations to the Government of India and the controllers of their finances on their being in a position to give the Provinces this measure of justice, but he added that it must not be supposed that there remained nothing to be done. They had not yet got the remission. They had only the proposals of the Government of India, in which they contemplated inviting the concurrence of the Assembly, and until all the processes necessary had been completed, their figures could not be altered, and they must remain with a deficit Budget. They had ample warning

that there were powerful interests at work to raid their surplus, or to divert it to other uses. They were able to exercise great influence in the Assembly. They were well organised and had the services of skilful propagandists in the Press and on the platform, but to put it baldly the choice now was between the needs of the people and the profits of the millowners, and so long as the issue was kept clear, he could not imagine that there would be any hesitation as to which was to be preferred. He believed that there would be such strong and unanimous expression of opinion on this matter as to show their representatives at Delhi that there was no lukewarmness or weakness here. He said: "The responsibility will lie with them, and they are not likely to treat it lightly. They will be heartened by the assurance that we shall accord full recognition to the steadfastness with which they will have to reinforce their patriotism, if they are to stave off all attempts to diminish or retard the rectification of the injustice from which we have so long suffered."

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET.

The general discussion of the Budget which was begun on the 4th March was continued till the 6TH MARCH and concluded on that day after the Government members had replied to the non-official criticisms regarding various aspects of the Budget.

The Chief Minister, in the course of his reply, said that the reduction of the Provincial contribution depended on the passing of the Finance Bill of the Government of India, and expressed the hope that the Madras members of the Assembly would do their duty towards the Madras Presidency.

The Minister for Excise, replying to the demand for excise reform and the introduction of prohibition, said that the problem was entirely one of revenue, and, if the members could suggest a new source of revenue to replace excise revenue, the matter would become practical for solution.

After other members had replied the Finance Member replied on the debate. Referring to the Bombay Council's protest on the subject of the reduction of the provincial contribution he characterised the Bombay members as great believers in the game of bluff. Those that were interested in the abolition of the cotton excise were not likely to slacken their efforts, and he sincerely hoped that the Madras representatives in the Assembly would carry on their righteous work of reducing the Provincial burden until in the course of the next few years the iniquitous impost was completely wiped out.

Voting on Budget Grants.

The Reforms Enquiry Report.

The Voting on Budget Grants commenced on the 16TH MARCH when an adjournment motion brought forward by the member for Coimbatore to discuss the unsatisfactory character of the Muddiman Committee Report was discussed and was carried unanimously. Government members refrained from participating in the discussion or voting. Non-official members, Swarajists, Independents, United Nationalists and Ministerialists joined in condemning the Report as unsatisfactory, retrogressive and disappointing. The mover referred to the Majority recommendation as amounting to a stab from behind. He appealed to the parties in the House to join together in condemning the Report and requested

the Ministers to decline to accept responsibilities of office unless their demands were granted fully.

Another member saw in the Majority Report evidence of mistrust of the British in the capacity of Indians for Self-Government and enmity of the bureaucracy towards further constitutional progress.

Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar, a prominent Ministerialist, in condemning the Report expressed the hope that it was not the last word. On the question of the further constitutional advancement in India he said that he and his party and all Constitutionalists in India who had given genuine proof of their bonafides in the working of the Reforms found that Dyarchy was unworkable and that an immediate change in the constitution was necessary. He wanted the British Government and British statesmen to take a larger view of the situation in India where the political consciousness of the people, both classes as well as masses, had developed to a remarkable degree and further reforms had to be initiated immediately, for the Constitutionalists would have to be expunged altogether. Referring to communal and racial differences existing in the country he said that such differences existed even in England and Ireland, and these could not be held to be a bar to political progress.

Sir K. V. Reddi, ex-Minister, strongly condemned the Majority report and said the Committee had not moved even an inch in the direction of further Reforms. The motion was carried and the Council adjourned.

Land Revenue Administration.

On the 17TH MARCH the Council voted Government demand of Rs. 254.51 lakhs for Land Revenue Administration subject to the reduction of Rs. 1,20,000. Government policy in regard to the introduction of Land Revenue Bill in local Legislative Council and other matters such as resettlements in certain districts etc., were discussed before demand was disposed of by token motions and a substantial cut amounting to Rs. 1,18,000 was effected from the sum by the House by refusing the provision for the Board of Revenue and urging its abolition.

Excise Policy Attacked.

The Minister for Excise next moved his demand for Rs. 42.38 lakhs for excise administration. Rao Bahadur C. V. S. Narasimha Raju, leader of the Opposition, proposed to cut down this sum by omitting the provision for excise officers. He pointed that this was merely a token motion and his party might agree to the cut being reduced to a smaller sum. In order not to hamper administration their object in bringing this motion was to express want of confidence in the Minister for Excise in the matter of excise reform. He then went into vigorous criticism of the Minister's policy, in that there had been no active attempt made to put down drink evil during the last four years and a half. He held that while Bombay, United Provinces and Calcutta had moved forward in the matter, however haltingly, Madras had done nothing beyond constituting advisory committee.

The hon'ble Mr. Patroin replying characterised the mover's attempt as a party move after the Hon'ble Minister enumerated various measures initiated by him in the reduction in drink evil in this presidency. There was a reduction of 2000 in total number of Arrack and Toddy shops and the price of liquor had been raised while steps were also taken to reduce the strength of liquor. Import duty on foreign liquor had been raised. Besides several restrictions were imposed in the location of the shops and their closing at a particular

time of the day. All these measures had resulted in reducing consumption and loss of revenue to the extent of two laks. He held that the measures taken in the direction of excise reform in Madras were far in advance of Bombay. The system of licensing boards with non-official presidents was also being tried and the Minister expressed hope that such measures as he had enumerated would lead them to the goal of prohibition. With regard to the adoption of a rationing system he quoted from the Administration report the opinion of the Bombay Government with regard to its working and said he would not recommend the adoption of that system in Madras. He concluded with a few remarks on the financial aspects of the matter.

On the 18TH MARCH Mr. Satyamurti led the debate for opposition on Mr. Raju's motion of want of confidence in the Excise Minister. The speaker held that the Excise Minister had made no earnest move forward during the last twelve months for bringing down the drink evil and he had not initiated any policy tending to reform. He was also party to ruthless campaign of repression which was launched against temperance workers in the days of non-co-operation. With regard to finding fresh source of revenue the speaker held that it was unfair to throw responsibility on the Council which was not in confidence of the Finance Member.

Mr. O. Thanickachalam Chetty in opposing the motion characterised the present motion as a bid for office without convincing credentials. Turning to the work of the minister he pointed out there had been reduction both in consumption and number of persons going for drink since 1921.

Dr. John Mathai opposing the motion said while he recognised the increased need for temperance reform, the cause they advocated was not likely to make any move forward unless those interested in it gave sufficient thought to complex financial issues involved.

Sir James Simpson opposing the motion said they could not make people sober by act of legislature. In his opinion steps advocated could not take them nearer to goal.

Mr. C. R. Reddi supported the motion and appealed to the Muslim and nominated members to vote with the opposition basing their action on record of ministry.

Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, a prominent Ministerialist, then spoke supporting the Ministry after which the motion was put to the vote and declared defeated by a large majority of 73 to 31 votes with the result the motion of no confidence in the Minister was turned down into one of confidence by a large elected majority of votes.

After the excise demand was disposed of the Council proceeded to discuss the grant relating to stamps and voted the sum fully subject to nominal reduction of rupees one hundred.

Governor's Household, Staff and Bodyguard.

On the 21ST MARCH, the House proceeded to discuss a grant relating to the Governor's staff and household. The question of appointing an Indian as Private Secretary to the Governor was raised. It was pointed out that such an appointment was desirable with a view to keep His Excellency in touch with the Indian view. A Christian member said that in view of the existing clash and suspicion between the various communities it was desirable to have a European Private Secretary who would be above such suspicions and prejudices and would command the confidence of all communities. The motion was rejected.

Another motion urged the abolition of the Governor's bodyguard on the ground of economy. It was pointed out on behalf of Govt. that even in democratic countries such paraphernalia was recognised as emblems of dignity and the bodyguard had distinctive popular value. The proposal was rejected.

The Hydro-Electric Development.

The Hon'ble Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer then placed his statement in the Council regarding the Government's policy and programme in the matter of the Hydro-electric development in the Presidency.

After referring to the schemes embarked on by the Bombay and Punjab Governments he said that Madras had great possibilities and was well-suited for these enterprises. Referring to the Pykara scheme on the Nilgiris he pointed out that it would cover areas in four districts and was capable of linking up a number of hydro-electric centres in this Presidency. This scheme would cost three crores of rupees and fifty lakhs would be required for initial expenses. The member was convinced that in the development of this enterprise lay the industrial future of the country. With regard to the ways and means of making a start he suggested the formation of a registered company under the Trade Facilities Act of England. With reference to the question whether sufficient capital could not be raised locally he said nothing would be better, but that was not likely. In conclusion, he said that a comprehensive statement on the subject would be prepared and placed before them before July, and that Government would not find any decisive step until then.

Reduction of Executive Strength.

On the 23RD MARCH two non-official motions proposing small cuts in travelling allowances and establishment of the Executive were carried. The former urged the desirability of reducing the strength of the Executive Council from four to three or two on the ground that there was not enough work for four Executive Council Members, and some of the portfolios, for political and economic reasons, could be transferred from the reserved side to the Ministers. The second motion raised the question of reducing the salaries of Executive Council members on the ground that this country being too poor could not afford to pay at the present scale. Both motions were carried.

Another motion for omitting the allotment for the Staff Selection Board gave rise to a heated debate. The motion was brought by ministerialists who pointed out that the non-Brahmin Hindu community was not adequately represented on the Board and that they being the majority community had the right to control the work of the board.

The Finance Member speaking on the motion said that the staff selection board was intended to eliminate patronage and to give equal opportunities to all communities. The motion was put to the vote and resulted in a tie, thirty-five members voting on either side. The president gave his casting vote against the motion in favour of retention of the allotment.

Reduction of Ministers' Salary.

On the 24TH MARCH the Council rejected the motion for reducing the Ministers' salaries without division. In attacking the motion for reducing the Ministers' salaries some members observed that the Opposition proposal, if accepted, would seriously impair the dignity of the Ministers. The House once thought that the Ministers' salaries should be fixed at four thousand a month. The Ministers had voluntarily

agreed to that proposal and now the Opposition wanted their salaries to be reduced still further. They urged that it would not be consistent with the dignity of the House, if such motions were repeatedly to be brought before the House. The Opposition replied that the sponsors of the motion in fixing the amount at three thousand and five hundred were more generous than the Muddiman Committee and Lord Lytton. They raised the question for retrenchment and believed that the Ministers should set an example in the matter. The motion was rejected.

Reduction of High Court Strength.

The motion urging reduction of the strength of the Madras High Court was discussed in connection with the Budget demand for the High Court.

The Member for University raised the question on the ground that the present strength was unnecessarily large and wanted the number of judges to be reduced from 14 to 12.

The Law Member observed that he could not accept the proposal without prejudice to the interests of litigant public in view of arrears which had accumulated and the question could be considered when the arrears were disposed of. The motion was pressed and carried by a majority of votes.

Administration of Jails.

On the 26TH MARCH interesting question relating to Government's Jail Policy were raised in the Council and the Home Member's demand for Rs. 30'14 lakhs for administrations of Jails was agreed to subject to the reduction of rupees one lakh one hundred. The reduction was effected under two motions. The first one was a token motion proposing a cut of Rs. 100 to request Government to do away with racial discrimination in the matter of diet between Europeans and Indians. The second motion was raised for the purpose of economy by reducing the allotment by one lakh. Two members including the Deputy President of the House while speaking on this motion voiced dissatisfaction of the House in regard to the Government's policy regarding M. P. Narayana Menon (Hindu Congressman) who was convicted for complicity in the Moplah rebellion and whose release was urged by the Council last year by means of a resolution.

The Home Member in explaining the position of the Government said it would be very unfair to single out Narayana Menon for release while hundreds of Moplahs, most of whom his followers, who were convicted for minor offences, were still in the jail. Such course was likely to create resentment in Moplah circles. The Home Member understood that Moplahs in the rebellion area were not in favour of his release. Both the motions were, however, carried.

The Police Budget.

The Hon'ble Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer next introduced the Police Budget. A nominal cut was proposed by a member to urge reduction in strength of the City C.I.D. staff. The Law Member pointed out that the staff was not unnecessarily large and was too small compared with other cities. With regard to the charge that every political worker was being shadowed and tracked by two constables the Law Member held it was a very exaggerated statement and could not be true. The motion was lost.

On the 27TH MARCH during the discussion on the Police Budget several members criticised the Government's policy in regard to the Special Police which are posted in Malabar and East Coast areas. A sum of rupees 3,67,300

had been provided in the budget for the maintenance of these special forces in the rebel areas of Malabar and the Agency tracts and a reduction of one lakh in the provision was proposed on the ground that there was no necessity for keeping these special forces in the areas concerned at the proposed strength. This motion was carried by 32 against 30 votes and the demand for police administration (Rs. 153.97 lakhs) was agreed to subject to reduction of one lakh.

The Council next voted 9'07 lacs for education reserved ; 151'11 lakhs for education transferred. All the remaining demands were put from the chair and agreed to without discussion.

Governor Certifies the Police Budget.

On the 30TH MARCH the President read a message from the Governor certifying certain items of the Budget provisions as being essential for the discharge of his responsibility for the administration. These provisions were adversely voted upon by the Council during the Budget debate and relate to the abolition of the Official Receiver, the reduction of the number of High Court Judges, the abolition of the Board of Revenue, and the disbandment of the Special Police.

The Leader of the Opposition in making statement said that in view of the certification of certain Budget provisions against the wishes of the House, his party had decided not to attend the day's proceedings. He requested the President not to take their actions as disrespect shown to the Chair, the House or the Government. He then withdrew.

The Remitted Provincial Contribution.

The House next considered the supplementary grants and when a few demands had been disposed of, the member from Kistna moved that further demands be adjourned till the Government had considered in the Cabinet the question of the disposal of the Rs. 1.16 lakhs derived from the remission of the Provincial contribution. The mover was interested in the allocation of sufficient funds for the nation-building departments. He was supported by several other members and the remaining demands were carried.

Cochin Port Trust Bill

The Finance Member next introduced the Cochin Port Trust Bill, providing for the regulation, conservancy and improvement of the Port of Cochin. The Bill proposed to constitute a Board of Trustees to carry out the provisions of the Act consisting of 10 to 15 members, including the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, as the Local Government may notify, two Trustees elected by the Cochin Chamber of Commerce, one by the United Planters' Association of Southern India, two trustees appointed by the Local Government and two Trustees nominated by the Cochin and Travancore States each. Not less than two-fifths of the number of Trustees shall be Indians and no person shall be qualified to be a Trustee if he is not a British subject of an Indian State. The Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

On the 31ST MARCH the Council discussed non-official business. One non-contentious Bill of purely local interest relating to municipal affairs was passed and two other similar bills were introduced.

Mr. Satayamurthi's Bill to amend the President's Salary Act, providing for the President of the Council to be a whole-time officer, who should not engage himself in any other remunerative work, was postponed to next

session on the advice of the Hon. Mr. C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, leader of the House, who suggested that the question be considered by a conference of leaders of all parties in the House with a view to introducing a Bill to which the House could consent unanimously.

Loans to Malabar Planters.

A member from Malabar moved adjournment to raise a discussion on the Government's proposals to write off loans given to private individuals and planters, so far as such proposals related to loans of Rs. 1,000 and above and the payment of Rs. 41,000 to Poliankode Rubber Estate (a European concern) in Malabar on account of losses suffered during the Moplah rebellion.

This matter was the subject of a lively discussion. The mover and his supporters complained that, while the Government extended their help to the estate referred to and some other individuals, hundreds of other sufferers were left in the cold. They would have had no objection if the same treatment had been meted out to all people concerned, irrespective of race or position on the mere merits of the cases. They held that the Government's policy underlying this matter was questionable. The motion of adjournment was carried.

The Houses next proceeded to discuss the resolution relating to the appointment of a committee of officials and non-officials to enquire into and suggest measures to put a stop to the existence of corruption amongst public servants of all grades.

The Law Member pointed out the impracticability of the proposal and pointed out that individual cases were receiving the attention of the Government. The resolution was rejected.

On the 1ST APRIL the Council held its last meeting of the present session. The resolution for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the grievances of non-gazetted officers was carried after prolonged discussion.

The next important matter discussed related to the excise policy of the Government, and a resolution was moved that the excise policy should be radically changed and immediate steps should be taken to secure a substantial reduction in consumption of intoxicants in the presidency at once, and total prohibition in the near future.

The Minister for Excise gave assurance that he would give the House opportunity to discuss the report of the Excise Committee before orders are passed on it and the resolution was thereupon withdrawn.

The House then adjourned sine die.

Autumn Session

MADRAS—18TH AUGUST 1925

The autumn session of the Madras Legislative Council commenced on 18TH AUGUST in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, Dewan Bahadur Swamykannu Pillay presiding. There was a large attendance of members.

Governor on Hydro-Electric projects.

After the new members had taken the Oath of Allegiance, H. E. the GOVERNOR addressed the Council. His Excellency referred to the loss which the Council and the Presidency in general had sustained in the death of one of their foremost citizens (Sir T. Chetty), who was at one time a familiar figure in the Council.

Passing on to other matters His Excellency said :—"The Hon. Members will share with my Government the satisfaction we feel that, as a result of the conclusion of

negotiations with Mysore, we were enabled to obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State to the construction of a project which will not only help to irrigate over 800,000 acres of fresh land, but will also protect and safeguard the existing irrigation system in Trichinopoly and Tanjore districts.

"Before I leave this subject I should like to congratulate my colleague, Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, and all those who have worked under him, on the success that has attended their unflinching efforts to promote one of India's greatest irrigation projects. It is the object of my Government to initiate and push through as expeditiously as possible certain schemes for the cheap production of power from hydro-electric centres.

"The most promising of the scheme is the one in relation to the Pykhara water-falls, which the Government are anxious to inaugurate, not only because of the natural facilities of the particular locality, but because for various reasons it will, in our opinion, be the best object-lesson to the people at large of the advantages of cheap power.

"Certain negotiations which have been pending for the purpose of enabling the Government to re-acquire control over water-power in the locality, and to re-purchase the concession that had been granted by the Madras Government before they envisaged schemes for the utilisation of such power have just now been happily concluded, and, I trust, that it will be possible to start work at a very early period.

"The Hon. Members of this Council will also be interested to learn that a joint investigation of hydro-electric possibilities in South India is now being carried on by the Government and the South Indian Railway Company, and if, as is hoped, the results of such investigation are favourable, the subject of the electrification of a part at least of the South Indian Railway will come within the range of practical politics. Such electrification will not only be of great use from the railway point of view, but will establish centres of distribution and utilisation of our power resources."

After the Governor's speech demands for supplementary grants under various heads were discussed and disposed of.

Mr. Iyengar's Adjournment Motion

The President announced before the House adjourned that the Governor had disallowed Mr. Venkataramana Iyengar's adjournment motion regarding Lord Birkenhead's speech on the ground that the subject matter of the motion was not the primary concern of the Government.

Consequent on the Governor's message disallowing the motion relating to Lord Birkenhead's speech the Nationalists in the Legislative Council held a meeting and decided to oppose the first motion for a grant on the Reserved side. Accordingly when the Home Member moved a supplementary grant, Mr. Venkataramana Iyengar raised the question of Lord Birkenhead's statement.

Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar on behalf of the 'Justice' party said that all parties were agreed in the view that the statement was a very disappointing one, but the question of the Secretary of State's statement was too important to be raised on the motion for a supplementary grant. He therefore appealed to Mr. Venkataramana Iyengar to withdraw his motion, as he had virtually gained his object in drawing attention to it.

The motion was not pressed and the grant was made.

On the 19TH AUGUST, on Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar's motion, the Government was recommended to appoint a Committee of the House to examine Mr. Courtenay's report and evidence and to sift further evidence, if necessary, on the question of advising the Government to expunge the passages from the public records and the reflections cast on Mr. Kesava Pillay, the Deputy President of the House, in the report of Mr. Courtenay, and the Government order thereon. The motion was carried.

On the 20TH AUGUST discussion was resumed on the Madras Borstal Bill providing for the establishment and regulation of Borstal schools in the presidency for the detention and training of adolescent prisoners. The Bill was referred to a select committee.

Sir A. P. Patro then moved the introduction of the Andhra University Bill and made a lengthy speech dealing with the reasons for constituting a university, its aims and special features. Next day, the 21ST AUGUST, the first reading was passed and the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

There was a heated discussion on the motion of the Development Minister for applying certain provisions of the Cotton Transport Act restricting the exportation of cotton from some of the cotton producing areas of Madras Presidency. Members from the cotton producing districts objected to the proposal on the ground that it would adversely effect the interests of the cotton growers. Further discussion was, therefore, postponed.

On the 24TH AUGUST the most important Bill on the agenda was one by the representative of the depressed classes to amend the Madras City Tenants' Protection

Act, 1922. The mover pointed out that the Bill sought to rectify certain omissions in the original Act by providing reasonable compensation for all improvements effected by tenants on the land, and the fixing of a fair rent. After a short discussion the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

Moplah Colonisation in Andamans

Mr. Uppi, Moplah member, moved a resolution urging the suspension of the scheme to colonise the Andamans with Moplahs and urged the appointment of a committee of non-official members of the Council to visit the Andamans and report on the conditions prevailing there.

The discussion of Mr. Uppi's resolution was taken up on next day, the 25TH AUGUST when several members supported the motion and condemned the scheme on moral, social and physical grounds. The Government members, however, repudiated the suggestion that in embarking on this scheme the Government were actuated by a political motive to deplete Malabar of Moplahs and maintained that it was a humane scheme to promote the interests of the Moplahs concerned. The resolution was carried.

The Council also passed a resolution urging the appointment of a committee to hold an investigation into the problem of unemployment in the Madras Presidency and report suggesting remedial measures.

On the 26TH AUGUST the Council resumed discussions on the motion of the Development Minister approving the notification and rules issued under Sections 3 and 7 of the Cotton Transport Act of 1923. The object of these notifications and rules was to declare certain cotton growing areas in the Madras Presidency as protected areas to prohibit the importation of cotton into those places from the neighbouring areas with a view to preventing the adulteration of high class Combodia cotton with inferior varieties. The motion with slight amendments was passed.

On the 27TH AUGUST the outstanding demands for supplementary grants were discussed after the usual interpellations.

The Minister for Local Self-Government moved a grant of Rs. 625 lakhs for distribution among local bodies to improve the water supplies in the rural areas. The Minister pointed out that the necessity for liberal contributions to local bodies for improving the sanitation and water supplies in the rural areas was strongly felt in the past, but owing to financial stringency the Government could not do much in the matter. They were enabled to make the present provision out of the remission of the provincial contribution. The grant was voted.

After the remaining items on the agenda had been disposed of the Council adjourned till the 28th October.

MADRAS—28TH OCTOBER 1925

After a prolonged recess the Council met on the 28TH OCTOBER, the newly elected President, Mr. Ratnaswami Pillai, occupying the Chair.

After the day's interpellations were over, the member from Coimbatore moved the adjournment of the House with the object of discussing famine conditions in Coimbatore and measures of relief. The President having admitted the motion the matter was discussed later in the afternoon when the adjournment motion was carried after a full discussion. The mover drew a vivid picture of the sufferings of the people in the affected villages in respect of food grains, fodder and drinking water, and requested the Government to place a sum of Rs. 20,000 in the hands of the Collector for their relief.

The Andhra University.

Dr. U. Rama Rao next presented to the House a petition signed by a number of persons requesting the House to exclude Bellary from the jurisdiction of the proposed Andhra University and to allow the district to continue under Madras University till the establishment of Karnataka University.

Sir A. P. Patro moved for the second reading of the Andhra University Bill.

Sir Venkata Reddy moved an amendment to the effect that the University be called the Telugu University. The amendment was defeated by a majority of two votes.

The Minister for Development and most of the Ministerialists supported the amendment, but the Government with the exception of the Minister for development remained neutral.

Minister's Unconstitutional Remark

On the 29TH OCTOBER, after interpellations, the Leader of the Opposition moved for adjournment to call attention to a definite urgent matter of public importance, namely, "the inappropriate and unconstitutional observations recently made by the Minister of Education before the South Canara Christian League at Mangalore and the Moplah deputation at Calicut, purporting to request them to send a particular type of representative to the Legislative Council if they expected favours from the Government."

Speakers, supporting the motion, pointed out that the remarks of the Minister were unparliamentary and against the rules laid down by the Government of India Act. They admitted that Ministers had a right to address party meetings to elucidate party policy, but objected to them making use of their official position for electioneering purposes and making such remarks to deputations.

Sir A. P. Patro explained that the remarks attributed to him were inaccurately reported and that they were made, not in reply to a deputation, but in the course of a friendly conversation. He claimed for himself the right of an elected member to express his individual views on political subjects.

Mr. Moir said that the speeches made revealed that there was a good deal of misconception in the minds of members, but Sir A. P. Patro's statement had convinced him that he had not violated the rules.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, appealed to the mover to withdraw the motion in view of the statement made by the Minister. The motion was accordingly withdrawn.

Andhra University Bill.

On the 30TH OCTOBER, at the resumed discussion on the Andhra University Bill in the Council an amendment, giving power to the Local Government to exclude by notification any area of institution from the operations of the Act, was accepted by the Minister in charge of the Bill and carried.

Amendments for excluding Bellary, Anantpur, Cuddapah and Kurnool, which comprise the Ceded Districts, and also for the exemption of Ganjam (Oriya District) were lost. Further discussion on the Bill was adjourned.

Officials and Political Controversies.

On the 30TH OCTOBER another motion for adjournment was made, the object being to discuss the question of the alleged growing tendency among public servants in the Province of taking part in political controversies and expressing opinions on acutely controversial subjects as illustrated by recent speeches of the Collectors of Ramnad and South Arcot and certain observations by the Commissioner of Police, Madras, in his administration report.

The motion was brought by Mr. A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar, a Ministerialist, who read extracts from Commissioners' report which stated, inter alia, "the Congress Party was not much in evidence. The Swarajist party gained strength and was able to capture seven out of nine vacant seats in the corporation. In the Legislative Council a few members of this party made themselves conspicuous. The Unity Conference at Delhi helped to bring together various parties and the new Ordinance in Bengal gave an unexpected impetus to the cry for unity. The non-Brahmin movement showed signs of decay."

These observations, the speaker contended, were out of place in a Police administration report. The second charge related to remarks made by the Collector of South Arcot in a speech on the occasion of opening the hall of the District Board. The Collector was said to have stated that communal electorates were only ephemeral. The third charge related to remarks made in the course of a speech by the Collector of Ramnad criticising the present educational system.

A lively discussion followed and the motion being talked out the Council adjourned.

The Andhra University Bill

On the 2ND NOVEMBER, after interpellations, the House proceeded with the discussion of amendments to the Andhra University Bill. The discussion mainly centred on the exclusion of certain non-Telugu areas, such as Bellary District and certain portions of Ganjam District, and the idea of concentration involved in the Andhra University scheme. It was contended that the idea underlying the university scheme was to foster and improve the Vernacular of Andhra Province, which was Telugu, and that non-Telugu areas should, therefore, be excluded from the operation of the Bill.

The idea of concentrating university life in a few centres, as was proposed to be done under the Bill, was also opposed on the ground that the educational interests of a vast area of Andhra Province would suffer. Both the amendments were, however, lost.

On the 4TH NOVEMBER the debate on the Andhra University Bill was resumed. After a prolonged discussion the House, by a majority, decided to have Beswada as the headquarters of the University on the ground that it enjoyed a central position. The claims of Rajahmundry, one of the University concentration centres, were strongly pressed on the plea that the largest amount of academical atmosphere in the Andhra country was focussed there. Vizagapatam was also mentioned as a suitable place for the location of the head-quarters if Rajahmundry was rejected.

Another amendment, to throw open the office of Vice-Chancellor of the University for election by the Senate was also rejected.

On the 6TH NOVEMBER the *Andhra University Bill* was passed into law. The Leader of the Opposition opposed the motion for final reading of the Bill on the ground that the basic principle of the Bill, namely, concentration, had been violated by acceptance of a clause providing for the growth of first-grade colleges in centres other than those decided on according to the principle of concentration.

Messrs. C. R. Reddi and Satyamurthi also criticised the provisions of the Bill. Mr. T. E. Moir, referring to the financial aspect, observed that no statutory provision had been made in the Bill, but the matter would receive their fair and impartial consideration.

The Minister for Education, in winding up the debate, expressed the hope that the new University education in Andhra Desa would proceed on sound lines and promote Andhra culture in the true national spirit.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami next introduced a Bill to amend the Indian Ports Act, 1908, in its application to Madras Presidency. Under the definition of "vessels" in the present Act motor boats escaped from payment of port dues. To avoid such a contingency the present amendment of the Act is proposed. The Bill was passed.

Supplementary Grants

The House next discussed motions for supplementary grants. On the motion of the Home Member the grant was made of an additional sum of Rs. 85,000 under Forest Reserves for the establishment of three saw mills which are intended to supply 200,000 sleepers to the South Indian Railway during the year. Certain members urged the Government to Indianise the Forest Service and appoint Indians as Conservators of Forests.

The Home Member pointed out that out of 11 appointments made during the year to higher posts ten were given to Indians.

Another grant of Rs. 2,40,500 was also made to the Government for the purchase of two buildings in Bellary to be used as jails, one of which was to accommodate prisoners suffering from tuberculosis. In the course of the discussion it was elicited from the Government that the Andamans scheme for colonisation of Moplah prisoners had been temporarily suspended and the Local Government was in correspondence with the Government of India with regard to the constitution of the Committee as urged by the Legislative Council to enquire into the scheme.

The House, by a majority, granted a sum of Rs. 1,65,000 to the Government for the purpose of loans to the Madras Hindu Religious Endowment Board, which required this amount to meet its initial expenses and establishment charges, and also to defray legal expenses in defending some suits against it.

On the 7TH NOVEMBER the Council passed a number of supplementary demands for grants.

The principle of communal representation as applied to educational institutions was opposed by some members, with special reference to the Madras Medical College, on the ground that the tax-payers' money should not be utilised for the advantage of a particular community. It was pointed out by one speaker that in the Madras Medical College two-thirds of the accommodation was reserved for non-Brahmins.

One member defended the Government's policy in the matter of reservation on the ground that the community for which seats were reserved was not so well advanced in education that it required special facilities, and also on the ground that this community constituted more than 90 per cent. of the population of the Presidency.

The Council then adjourned till the 14th December.

On the 14TH DECEMBER, after questions, Mr. Satyamurti's motion for the adjournment of the House to discuss the Government's nomination to the Madras Corporation of Mr. Thanikachalam Chettiar, who was defeated at the election, was disallowed by the President, who stated that the purpose could have been achieved by moving a resolution.

Mr. Krishnan Nair's motion for adjournment for discussion of the policy of the Government in issuing an order prohibiting Exhavas and others from entering the streets

of Kalpathi during the car festival there, between the 18th and 16th November, was also disallowed.

Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, the Member-in-Charge, stated that the order was to have effect only during the car festival; that it was not intended to question the right of any community to enter the public highways and was only to preserve law and order. The Government left the matter to the discretion of the local officials. The Government were satisfied that there were possibilities of a disturbance at that time at Kalpathi, necessitating the promulgation of such an order. The Government policy was always to maintain the principle that everyone of His Majesty's subjects had the right to pass through the public highways, but they held that where the right pertained to a particular road, it had to be established by regular judicial proceedings.

The Council then proceeded with the introduction and discussion of certain non-official amendment Bills to the Madras Local Boards Act, the Madras City Municipal Act, and the Madras District Municipalities Act, but all the amendments were lost, except one by a member representing the depressed classes, who moved to amend the Madras Local Boards Act in order to give statutory effect to the Government order allowing any person belonging to any class or community to walk through any public road, street, or pathway in any town or village, and giving any person belonging to the depressed classes access to the premises of any public office, well, tank, or places of public resort, and to places and buildings where public business was transacted.

The amendment Bill was read for the first time, and referred to a Select Committee.

On the 16TH DECEMBER the Council took up the Madras Borstal School Bill, as amended by the Select Committee. The discussion was resumed the next day when the House unanimously passed the Bill into Law.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, Law Member, moved a resolution recommending that the Madras City non-Mahomedan constituency be divided into two constituencies to be called the Madras City North Constituency and the South Constituency, for purposes of election to the Madras Legislative Council. He said there was public opinion behind the motion, and the Commissioner of the Corporation was also in favour of it. The Government was indifferent whether the motion was accepted by the House or not. The Government merely undertook to accede to public demand, and, therefore, brought the motion before the House to be accepted or rejected. Mr. Thanikachalam Chettiar and Mr. A. Ramasamy Mudaliar opposed the motion, on the ground that if it was accepted, it would curtail the privilege of voters, inasmuch as they would only be able to vote for two candidates, while, under existing arrangements, they could vote for four members. Mr. S. Satyamurti welcomed the resolution as a step towards the creation of single-member constituencies, not only in Madras but throughout the Presidency and declared that true democracy could function properly only in single-member constituencies.

The motion was lost, 21 voting for and 35 against.

Corrupt Practices Bill.

On the 18TH DECEMBER Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer moved the following resolution: "The Council accepts the principles of the Legislative Bodies Corrupt Practices Bill, introduced in the Legislative Assembly, on the 25th August 1925."

The Law Member in doing so said that the House was asked to accept the principles of the Bill, namely, that bribery of members of legislative bodies was to be made punishable. He had been asked by the Home Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council to take the opinion of the House on the matter.

The leader of the Opposition moved the following amendment to the resolution: "For the words 'principles of the Legislative Bodies' Corrupt Practices Bill introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 25th August, 1925,' the following be substituted: 'The principle of making punishable corruption on the part of members of legislative bodies in India in the execution of their duties, and concerns. (1) That a Committee of the legislative body concerned be appointed (by a single transferable vote), of which the President shall be the President ex-officio, and the Deputy President member ex-officio, and should be constituted a court of record to try the offences mentioned in the Bill; (2) that a person convicted of any such offence should be liable to the maximum punishment of expulsion from the House; and (3) that the previous sanction of the President shall be necessary for the initiation of proceedings for any such offence.'"

The amendment was put to the vote and carried by 60 voting for and none voting against it. The Treasury benches and the nominated official benches remained neutral.

The House adjourned to meet again on the 8th February next.

Assam Legislative Council

SHILLONG—2ND MARCH 1925.

Governor on Increased Taxation.

The Budget Session of the Assam Legislative Council commenced on the 2ND MARCH 1925. Moulavi Abdul Rahim Chowdhry was elected President of the Council by a majority of votes. His Excellency Sir John KERR, Governor, in opening the Council, reviewed the financial condition of the province for the past five years, and pointed out the improvement in its position. He said the present remission of the provincial contribution granted to Assam would be of no benefit. Though the fact that the Government of India had been able to make a beginning with the reduction of the contributions was decidedly satisfactory and they might fairly cherish the hope that would not be many years before their turn came. His Excellency urged that until that time it would be a serious mistake to reduce deliberately the existing sources of revenue, and that was their justification for asking the Council again to pass Bills providing for an increase of court fees and stamp duties to raise additional revenue for the maintenance of the Transferred Departments. He undertook, if those Bills were passed, to devote during the next three years Rs. 10 lakhs to non-recurring schemes in the Transferred Departments, and a selection of those scheme would be made by the ministers, with the help of a committee appointed by the Legislative Council.

Financial Statement for 1925-26.

Sir William REID, the Finance Member, then introduced the Budget for 1925-26. The main features of the Budget were that for the first time of the history of the reformed Government the Finance Member had been able to record that the coming year would witness a real closing balance of Rs. 24,62,000. Several schemes of improvement under road repairing and building operations had been included in the list of schemes for the ensuing year. The local Government had also paid off to the Central Government the overdraft of Rs. 12,67,000 of the previous year. The financial progress was due to the large closing balance of Rs. 23,28,000 appearing at the end of the year 1923-24 as against the budgetted closing balance of Rs. 8,97,000. The opening balance for the coming year was shown to be Rs. 27,15,000. Receipts have been augmented under the heads of Excise, Land Revenue and Taxes on Income. The total receipts from all sources during the coming year were shown to be Rs. 2,41,31,000 as against Rs. 2,40,000 of the current year and Rs. 2,25,45,000 of the last year. The total expenditure last was estimated to be Rs. 2,43,48,000 in the coming year against Rs. 2,36,50,000 of the current year and Rs. 2,29,95,000 of the last year. The stamp revenue had been shown as reduced by 3 lakhs as a possible loss to the revenue if the Council do not sanction the further continuance of the present Stamp and Court Fees Acts.

Salaries of the officers of the Imperial Services were budgetted for the coming year at Rs. 30,11,000 against Rs. 27,89,000 of the current year, the increase being due to the effect being given to the recommendations of the Lee Commission. Retrenchment and economy effected by the Government of Assam during the past years were also responsible to a great extent for the present prosperity budget.

In conclusion, the Finance Member, summed up the financial position of the Province: "I must candidly admit that the present improvement in our financial position is far beyond by utmost expectations. The most I dared to hope was that the end of the current financial year would find us after we had paid off the first instalment of three lakhs of our overdraft from the Central Government with a few lakhs in hand and with the prospect of clearing our debt in another year or two while at the same time adding little by little to our reserves in actual fact. We have paid off the whole to the overdraft and thereby incidentally effected a considerable saving in interest charges and we hope to end the year under budget with a balance of twenty-four and a half lakhs.

Remission of Provincial Contribution.

On the 3RD MARCH, after question time, Lieutenant-Colonel W. D. Smiles, a Planting member, proposed the adjournment of the House to protest against the unfair treatment meted out to Assam with regard to the remission of the Provincial contribution by the Government of India. The President allowed the motion on the condition that it be taken up for discussion the next day.

The House then considered and passed the Assam Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1925, moved by the Hon. Rai Bahadur Promoda Chandra Dutta, and leave to introduce the Assam Settlements Bill, 1925, as asked for by the Hon. Sir William Reid was granted.

Mr. Nilmoni Phukan's resolution, recommending the Assam Government to move the Government of India to take the necessary steps for introducing a uniform all-India price of opium, was accepted by the Government.

Rai Sahib Har Kishore Chakravarty withdrew his resolution recommending the fixing of the salaries of the Ministers at Rs. 3,500 each, remarking that he would reserve his remarks for the discussion of the demand which will be put forward by the Government providing for a similar sum.

Prohibition of Opium.

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha then moved a resolution recommending that the sale and consumption of opium in Assam, except for medicinal and scientific purposes, be totally prohibited, and accordingly legislation be undertaken immediately. He accused the Government of having no excise policy and quoted figures to show that the issues in opium were on the increase till 1921, when as a result of the vigorous efforts of the non-co-operation movement a reduction was effected.

He gave a very lucid history of the introduction of opium into Assam and how the policy of the Government had the effect of increasing the consumption. He gave figures from 1874 to 1924 and proved conclusively that the Government had no policy as regards opium. From the figures he stated that in 1920 the incidence for taxation per head of the population from opium revenue was Rs. 7-8-10 for Lakhimpore district,

Ra. 1-3-9 for Sibsagar, Ra. 2-3-8 for Nowgaon and Ra. 1-3-8 for Darrong. In his reply Sir William referred to the death of Lt. Singer for the alleged suppression of the poppy cultivation. Mr. Chaliha was ready with his facts and referred to the letter of Mr. Lushinton, Secretary to the Bengal Government, dated the 31st May 1862, where the reason of the death of this officer was given quite differently. Sir William looked very small and could hardly find words to support his arguments. Mr. Chaliha further stated that the public opinion of Assam is unanimous in condemning this Imperial traffic and he cited the evidence of Raibahadurs and Raisahibs before the Assam Opium Enquiry Committee in support of his contention. When he finished his speech the whole House was with him.

Mr. Rohinikanta Hatibaruah supported the resolution ably and he said the opium question is the only politics in Assam, specially in the Brahmaputra valley. Sj. Sarbeswar Baruah also supported the resolution. The entire national party contributed to the success of the resolution for the total prohibition of opium.

On the 4TH MARCH Mr. Sadananda Dowera moved that the provisions of the Assam Land Revenue Manual, relating to the rights and liabilities of the Government and the people and also to the settlements of land, be replaced by an Act or Acts of the Legislature. He pointed out that the decisions of the revenue courts were not uniform, and did not command the same amount of confidence as the judgments of the Civil Court.

Sir William Reid, on behalf of the Government, accepted the resolution, promising to appoint a committee to investigate the matter.

Travelling Allowance to Members.

Babu Brojendra Narain Chaudhury moved that in place of the 1 three-fourth first class travelling fares granted for railway journeys to Government officers and Council members, only two-second class fares be allowed, while the maximum halting allowance be fixed at Rs. 7½ per diem. He stated that in its present economic condition, the country could not afford to provide luxurious travelling and living and that the present day second class compartments were as comfortable as the first class compartments of 20 years ago.

The Hon. Sir William Reid replied that as regards Government officers, 1st class fares were granted only to officers who, in private life, would travel first class. As far as Council members were concerned, he left it to the House to determine the question. The Government would readily meet their wishes in the matter. The motion was lost by a large majority.

Remission of Provincial Contribution.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. D. Smiles moved the adjournment of the House to protest against the unfair treatment meted out to Assam, as compared with Bengal, in the matter of the remission of the provincial contribution. He declared that by the remission of Rs. 63 lakhs to Bengal, the Meston Committee's findings had been flouted, and asked why other provincial Governments were not consulted previously. Apparently it did not matter what taxes Assam paid, she got no benefits at the hands of the Central Government. The medical fee for attendance on dyarchy, which was seriously ill in Bengal, was Rs. 63 lakhs, and a further sum of Rs. 63 lakhs for two years more had been given her for convalescence. It was a gross injustice to Assam.

The Hon. Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta, Minister for Local Self-Government, in supporting the motion, said that Assam was always treated as a step-child. He declared that by not granting any remissions to Assam, the Ministry was especially embarrassed financially, and that paved the way to the unpopularity of dyarchy.

The Hon. Sir William Reid, speaking as leader of the House, said that when he became aware of the unjust treatment accorded to Assam in the matter, his loyalty to the Indian Government and to the Provincial Government got perilously near conflict. He regretted the decision of the Government of India.

Several other members also condemned the Government of India's action. The motion was ultimately put and carried, with only one dissident, in the person of Babu Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury, on the ground that the principle on which the Meston Award was based was not explained by the mover.

Transfer of Sylhet to Bengal.

Discussion on the resolution of Babu Krishna Sundar Das recommending to the Government that immediate steps be taken to open B.Sc. classes and to teach economics in the B.A. course in the Murari-chand College at Sylhet from the commencement of the next session was then taken up.

The Hon. Syed Mohammad Saadulla, Education Minister, replied that in view of the fact that the question of the transfer of Sylhet was in abeyance as a result of the resolution passed by the House last session, Government did not think it just or equitable to take any steps in the matter, specially as acceptance of the present motion would involve heavy recurring liabilities. Nor would it be fair to saddle Bengal with such fresh liabilities if Sylhet was to be annexed by Bengal.

A number of members opposed the motion, which was lost by one vote.

General Discussion of the Budget.

On the 5TH MARCH the general discussion of the budget was opened by Babu Brojendra Narayan Chaudhuri. He criticised the policy underlying the preparation of the budget which was to budget for large expenditure but actually to spend far less with the result that consciously or unconsciously the Government built up a balance of 27 lakhs. He criticised the P. W. D. and Land Revenue Budgets.

Babu Krishna Sundar Dam on the other hand congratulated the Finance Member on the prosperity of the provincial finances. He, however, deplored the expansion of opium revenue and regretted to observe that in the list of new schemes presented to the House the just claims of Sylhet and Cachar for water supply and medical relief have not found the recognition.

Col. Smiles suggested that the Finance Member in the next year's budget should omit contribution of 15 lakhs to the Central Government. He hoped that the scheme to convert Chittagong into major port would be supported by the Assam Government as it would ultimately benefit this province.

Mr. E. S. Roffey asked the Finance Member to press the Assam Oil Company for a reduction in price of petrol in Assam which was the scene of production and yet the price was higher than it was outside the province. This he characterised as scandalous.

Several other members spoke asking for further improvement of rural water supply and village sanitation for which purpose the Ministers should be provided with more liberal funds.

Next day, the 6TH MARCH non-official discussion on the Budget having unexpectedly terminated the day before, the Government benches proceeded to reply.

Sir William Reid, Finance Member, confessed there were few points for him to reply to. Referring to a criticism he stated that one provincial service officer was being appointed to the charge of a district and that in Surma Valley division all subdivisions were under P. C. S. Officers. As regards criticism on the Stamp Bills, that subject, he said, would be dealt with when it came up for discussion later. He disillusioned the mind of the House regarding the fallacy about allocation of expenditure between the Transferred and the Reserved sides.

Khan Bahadur Kutubuddin, Judicial Member, stated that he hoped to prove by quoting figures when the demands for grants were put forward that there was no ground for accusing the Government of selling justice nor would criticisms against the Jail Budget be justified.

Hop. Rai Bahadur P. C. Dutta, Minister of Local Self-Government made detailed reply to various criticisms levelled against his department.

To the criticism that no provision for a time-scale of pay for Subordinate Educational Service was made Hon. Maulavi Syed Saadulla, Education Minister, replied that he would deal with that question when the resolution on the same subject was discussed. As regards allocation of grants in aid the Hon. Minister pleaded insufficiency of funds.

Mr. H. C. Barnes replied that Mr. Roffeys remarks about the high cost of petrol would be brought to the notice of Assam Oil Company and with regard to the port of Chittagong Government realized its immense importance to Assam and sympathised with the wishes of the House but the subject did not come within the scope of this province.

Mr. G. E. Somes, offg. Chief Secy. quoted facts and figures dispelling illusion that the reserved depts. had been unduly favoured to the detriment of the transferred depts. Mr. G. T. Lloyd explained the opium policy of Government and Mr. O. H. Desenne that of P. W. D. budget. The general discussion of the Budget thus came to an end.

Court Fees and Stamp Bills.

On the 7TH MARCH, the House discussed two bills moved by Hon. Sir. William Reid, Finance Member, viz., the Assam Court Fees (amendment) bill 1925 and the Assam Stamp (amendment) bill 1925. In moving the bills Sir William stated that the object of extending operations of these measures for another 3 years was to provide a margin for expenditure on schemes of development and he gave an assurance to the House that the proceeds of these bills which would amount to approximately 10 lakhs would be utilised for developing those schemes in transferred depts., which the House may decide upon. The annual income would be 3 lakhs and Government would undertake to provide this sum for 3 years. There was a lengthy discussion on the subject which detained the House till evening. The argument against the introduction of the bills were mainly (1) that Government had enough funds at their disposal in view of a surplus budget this year and any improvements to be effected in transferred depts. could be

financed from this surplus; (2) that it would create a bad precedent to assent to these bills, as in future years transferred debts would be called upon to levy taxation for carrying out improvements in the transferred side and thirdly that the country was opposed to the introduction of taxation on principle.

The non-official members monopolised the whole discussion allowing the Finance Member no time to reply. There were many amendments which were all put and lost so that the bills were ultimately passed.

Sj. Sadananda Dowera then moved that a Committee of the House be appointed to consider how best to allocate the proceeds that will be derived from the bill and suggested that the revenue should be expended on improving rural water supply. This raised a protest from Babu Brajendra Narayan Chaudhury and the motion was dropped.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS.

On the 12TH MARCH the Council discussed demands for grants. Srijut Khirode Chandra Deb moved that the Ministers' salaries be reduced to Rs. 2. He argued that the Ministers did not command the confidence of the majority party in the House, and by voting for the Court-fees and Stamp Amendment Bills they lost the confidence of the people.

The Hon. Sir William Reid, on behalf of the Government, maintained that the present salary of Rs. 1,500 granted to the Ministers was inadequate.

Mr. Roffey moved that their pay be raised to Rs. 2,500 a month.

Both the amendments were, however, turned down by the House and the original motion of the Finance Member asking that a sum of Rs. 3,500 be provided was passed.

Another motion recommending that the sum of Rs. 80,000 for the establishment of Commissioners be reduced was carried.

On the 13TH MARCH demands for grants with one or two exceptions were voted. A censure motion by Babu Brajendra Narayan Chaudhury recommending that the demand for the grant under jails be reduced by Rs. 1 was carried by the house. The mover criticised the administration of jails generally and stated that the recommendations of the Jails Committee were not given effect to in their entirety. Sj. Kuladhar Chaliha in supporting the motion recounted his experiences in jail and condemned the lack of care and attention bestowed on convicts by the jail authorities.

On the 14TH MARCH Babu Brajendra Narayan Chaudhuri moved that the demand for the grant under European and Anglo-Indian Schools be reduced by Rs. 26,000. He pointed out that preferential treatment was being shown in the case of European education, and by way of comparison quoted figures for the education of European and Indian boys.

Sir William Reid, Finance Member, appealed to the House to protect the interests of the minority community. As regards the suggestion that Bengal should contribute part of the grant, Sir William said that the number of children who went from Assam to Bengal schools was greater than the number from Bengal to Assam schools. The motion was negatived.

Several other motions were discussed, after which the House adjourned.

On the 17TH MARCH demands for grants in the Transferred Departments under the heads Registration, Education (other than European) Medical, and Public Health came up for discussion in the Council. There

were several reduction motions calling for cuts of one rupee which, although ostensibly in the nature of censures, were put down evidently for inviting discussion and withdrawn on the Hon. Ministers making the necessary explanations. Thus the House passed on this day a total sum of over 37½ lakhs for the use of the Transferred Department.

On the 18TH MARCH the Council considered and passed demands for grants aggregating over fifteen lakhs partly under reserved and partly under transferred departments. There were four censure motions for reduction three of which were ultimately withdrawn and the fourth put to the vote and negatived. One motion moved by Babu Brojendra Narayan Chaudhuri was to the effect that the demand for the establishment of Superintendent, Civil Veterinary Department be refused. The mover's objective was the Superintendent Civil Veterinary himself, but that officers salary being non-voted, he being an imperial service officer, would serve purpose if provision for his staff were refused. The mover urged the replacement of this officer by an expert from provincial services.

Hon. Maulavi Syed Muhammad Saadulla, Education Minister, replying on behalf of the Government stated that this question would be considered on receipt of Government of India's instructions in connection with the general question in accordance with the Lee Commission's recommendations.

Another reduction motion moved by Sj. Nilmoni Phukan was to the effect that more money should be allotted for village communications which were being neglected by local boards.

The Hon. Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutta, Minister Local Self-Government, reminded the House that local boards were autonomous bodies and Government had no power over them in the matter of spending money on village communications. Nor did Government pretended to be more familiar with local village needs than boards themselves but the desirability of paying more attention to this aspect of question would be impressed on boards. On being pressed to division the motion was negatived.

On the 19TH MARCH the report of the Select Committee on the Assam Water Hyacinth Bill was presented in the Council. The Report states that the Bill as originally drafted requires extensive amendment to make it of practical utility and at the same time to avoid as far as possible interfering with the rights of owners or occupiers of land. In view of material alterations its republication has been recommended.

A motion recommending the introduction of charka-spinning in primary schools was negatived.

The Muddiman Report.

In the afternoon Maulavi Faiznur Ali moved adjournment of the House to consider the Muddiman Committee's report. Before the discussion commenced the Hon. Sir William Reid informed the House that official members, save Ministers, would not take part in the discussion as Government had not yet been able to formulate their views in the matter. The sense of the House was to the effect that they subscribed to the findings of the Minority report but condemned those of the Majority report.

The following resolution was ultimately carried: "This Council disapprove of the recommendations of the Majority Report as retrograde, disappointing, and calculated to delay the attainment of full responsible Government in the country, and this Council while agreeing with the

Minority in the view that Reforms have failed and are incapable of yielding better results in future, recommend the adoption of such steps as will lead to the appointment of either a Round Table Conference or Royal Commission for devising a constitution for granting full responsible Government to the country.

On the 20TH MARCH Babu Krishna Sunder Dam moved a resolution recommending that suitable arrangements be made by the Government to provide free conveyance for the non-boarder students of the Murarichand College, Sylhet from the town to the new college site at Thackeray Tilla. The motion was pressed to a division and carried.

On the 21ST MARCH, after question time, the Hon. Sir William Reid moved that Assam Settlements Bill 1925 be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon. The motion was adopted.

The House next proceeded to consider certain supplementary demands for grants. All the motions were carried except a demand of Rs. 2,800 under 47 Miscellaneous (Transferred) which was reduced by Rs. 1,800. This sum represented the allowance intended for senior E. A. C. of Shillong for performing duties of Vice-Chairman of the Municipal Board. It was contended that as Vice-Chairman of other Municipal Boards who were non-officials had not been similarly remunerated there was no justification for the present demand. The reduction motion was put and carried by 22 votes to 11.

There was some discussion under grant 'Administration of Justice' in connection with the expenditure incurred over Sylhet note forgery case. It was argued that as arrests in this case were made in Bengal and majority of witnesses came from that province the case should have been taken up in Bengal and resultant expenditure by that Government. The Hon. the Judicial member pointed out that although the arrests were made in Bengal the case originated in Assam and therefore it was incumbent on this Government to conduct it. The motion for reduction was defeated.

His Excellency the Governor then *prorogued the Council sine die*.

T h u n d e r S e s s i o n

SHILLONG—7TH SEPTEMBER 1925

The autumn session of the Assam Legislative Council commenced on the 7TH SEPTEMBER with Moulvi Abdul Hamid, President, in the Chair. After questions the President made feeling reference to the death of Sir Surendranath Banerjea, and subsequently moved the following resolution which was carried unanimously all standing:

"That this Council records its profound sense of sorrow at the sad death of Sir Surendranath Banerjea, the great pioneer in the field of Indian politics, who contributed full 50 years of devoted service to the material, social and political uplift of the Indian people, and offers its sincere condolences to the bereaved family.

Khan Bahadur Alauddin Ahmed CHAUDHURY next moved that the Assam Water Hyacinth Bill be taken into consideration.

Rai Bahadur P. C. Dutt, while sympathising with the object of the Bill, said that he felt constrained to oppose the motion on the ground that in the absence of the discovery of an effective remedy for the destruction of the

water hyacinth pest it was unfair to introduce a bill designed to give local bodies power to compel the people to destroy the weeds.

The discussion on this Bill had not concluded when the House adjourned.

On the 8TH SEPTEMBER the debate on the Water Hyacinth Bill, was resumed. Rai Bahadur Amarnath Roy's amendment, recommending that the Bill be re-committed to a select committee, was accepted by the House.

Khan Bahadur Alauddin Ahmed CHAUDHURI moved that a permanent committee, consisting of five officials and five non-officials, be appointed for advising the Minister for Education as the means to be adopted for stimulating Mahomedan education in the Province.

On the Minister explaining that a conference would shortly be convened, consisting of both officials and non-officials interested in the spread of Mahomedan education and the development of Islamic ideals so far as possible to work in harmony with the Text Book Committee, the mover withdrew his motion.

Babu Gopendralal DAS'S resolution recommending that the increased free rates in the high and middle English schools of the Habibganj sub-division in the district of Sylhet be at once reduced to the level of the tuition fees prevailing in all other such school in the Province was pressed to a division and carried.

On the 9TH SEPTEMBER the Council discussed partly official and partly non-official business. Two demands for supplementary grants amounting to Rs. 65,550 were discussed and ultimately passed.

Mr. H. C. Barnes, Finance Member, laid before the House a note on the present financial situation of the province and the Education Minister introduced the Assam Primary Education Bill, 1925.

Settlement of Waste Land.

Discussion on Mr. Rohinikanta Hati Barua's resolution was resumed. There were three amendments to the motion, which was ultimately accepted by the House in the following form :

"This Council recommends that the waste land in the Province should ordinarily be settled with the natives of the Province for special and ordinary cultivation with a view to encouraging agriculture by small capitalists in the Province without hampering the claims of immigrants."

The mover alleged unfair treatment on the part of the Government in the case of settlement of land as between Indians and Europeans, the latter, he stated, invariably being shown preference. He was supported by Mr. Kamakhayaram Barua, who cited certain instances purporting to show preferential treatment to Europeans in the settlement of land. Mr. Sadananda Dowers stated that the resolution was merely the embodiment of the Government's pledge made during a previous session to the effect that they were encouraging small capitalists to open up land for cultivation.

Mr. H. C. Barnes and Mr. Bentinek, on behalf of the Government, considered that the resolution sought to exploit the poor ryots in favour of the small capitalist and this was most unjust and unfair. Mr. Barnes maintained that the rules under which the Government acted were just and did not result in unfair dealing. Certain vague charges had been made against the officers of the Government, accusing them of unfair treatment. These officers were not here to defend themselves, and it was unfair to make such attacks on them. At all events, the charges were very vague. This was the first

time he had heard such charges in all his service, and if any member had definite cases to put forward, the proper place was outside the House, when the Government would investigate the matter fully.

The Grazing Tax.

On 10TH SEPTEMBER the discussion on the resolution moved by Srijut Mahadev Sarma, recommending the abolition of the grazing tax in Assam, was continued. Two other resolutions on the same subject, one in the name of Mr. Sadananda Dowera and one by Srijut Nilmani Phukan were taken up simultaneously.

The mover said that the grazing tax was most unpopular in the Province and should be abolished.

Mr. Sadananda Dowera proposed the appointment of a committee to consider the draft grazing rules with special reference to the needs and wishes of every party. Srijut Nilmani Phukan suggested that the tax might be abolished altogether, except in the case of professional grazers.

Mr. Barnes on behalf of the Government said that the revision of the grazing rules was expressly undertaken as the present rules were working badly. The Government were desirous of relieving the ryot from the tax on his cattle and to tax professionals. He would not undertake to offer much consideration to the proposal for the total abolition of the tax. He had already written to a dozen members asking them to meet in committee to consider the new draft grazing rules, and further than that he would not go.

The amendment of Mr. Dowera recommending that Government appoint a committee to consider the draft rules was ultimately put to the vote and carried by 15 votes to 10.

Amendment of Tenancy Law.

On the 11TH SEPTEMBER a resolution recommending the amendment of the Tenancy Law of 1869 in the districts of Goalpara and Sylhet on the lines of the Bengal Tenancy Act, and the appointment of a Committee to make recommendation, was carried by a narrow majority.

Mr. Barnes, on behalf of the Government, said that he knew that no demand had been made by the people of the district for the amendment of the present Act. The Govt. were contemplating the appointment of a committee to enact the new tenancy law, which would meet the needs of Assam.

Srijut Nilmani Phukan moved a resolution suggesting that no waste land be granted to railway companies in Assam for other than railway purposes.

Mr. Barnes said that as the Government had always adopted that policy, he saw no objection to the resolution.

On the 12TH SEPTEMBER the Council concluded its autumn session when Mr. S. C. Barnes (Finance Member) presented the report of the Committee on Public Accounts on the audit and appropriation reports of 1923-24.

Maulvi Faizur Ali suggested that the House should be given an opportunity of discussing such reports in future, to which the Govt. consented.

The Rev. Nichols Roy presented the report of the Select Committee on the Assam Temperance Bill and intimated his desire to introduce the Bill in the next session.

The Council was then prorogued.

Bombay Legislative Council

BOMBAY—20TH FEBRUARY 1925

The Bombay Legislative Council opened on the 20th February when Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah took the chair on receipt of His Excellency's approval of his unanimous election to its Presidentship. Mr. Pahalajani, Deputy President, who invited Sir Ibrahim to occupy the Chair, paid a tribute to his defence of popular rights and privileges, not only as President of the Legislative Council, but also as a member of the Executive Council before that. Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah occupied the Chair amidst applause, and after expressing gratitude for his election, promised to uphold the dignity and traditions of the House.

The Governor's speech.

His Excellency, the GOVERNOR, in opening the session, delivered a lengthy speech which was listened to by the House and by the large number of visitors present. The Governor congratulated the House on its unanimous choice of its President. He also congratulated the Government on the fact of their first nominee to the chair being accepted by the House.

Referring to the Budget Sir Leslie Wilson pointed out that a very large proportion of the increase in expenditure in the new financial year's Budget was on account of the Transferred Departments. Out of new items of demands amounting to about Rs. 50 lakhs, no less than Rs. 35 lakhs were proposed for these departments. This allocation of revenue had been made in pursuance of the deliberate policy of the Government, the steady expansion of departments for the administration of which the executive was directly responsible to the Legislative Council. It remained now for the Council to consider how the necessary funds could be raised by the proposed taxation. He felt sure that in coming to a decision the needs of the Presidency as a whole would be considered. With regard to the suggestion that more money should be made available for the necessities of the Transferred subjects by reducing the Reserved Departments' expenditure, and the arguments that the Transferred Departments were the only nation-building departments of the Government, His Excellency reminded them that for buildings of all kinds a sound foundation was required, and many of the Reserved Departments were engaged in maintaining those secure foundations on which alone a national edifice could be safely erected. It would, for example, be useless to provide schools and teachers in the rural areas, if on account of gangs of robbers and dacoits the roads were unsafe for children to attend the schools.

His Excellency then left the Council Chamber, and the House proceeded with the day's business.

Presentation of the Budget.

The Hon. Mr. H. S. LAWRENCE, Finance Member, presented the Budget for the year 1925-26. The opening balance of the current year was Rs. 5.45 crores, and the closing balance Rs. 4.67 crores; while there was a net increase in revenue of Rs. 34 lakhs. There was a reduction in expenditure of Rs. 65 lakhs.

Next year (1925-26) the estimated revenue amounts to Rs. 15.68 crores, and expenditure debitable to revenue to Rs. 16.09 crores, leaving a deficit of Rs. 41 lakhs. To meet this it was proposed to impose extra taxation to bring in Rs. 42 lakhs in the following manner :—

Rs. 18 lakhs by increasing Court fees, another Rs. 18 lakhs by increasing the transfer of property fees, and Rs. 6 lakhs by taxing the Turf Club totalisator bettings.

While there is no increase in the total demand on the Reserved side there is an increase of Rs. 65 lakhs on the Transferred side. The opening balance of the year is Rs. 4.67 crores. From this Rs. 57 lakhs is being taken for non-recurring capital expenditure leaving a balance of Rs. 4.11 crores, or adding an estimated surplus of Rs. 1 lakh, a closing balance of Rs. 4.11 crores, including Rs. 1.48 crores in famine funds.

General Discussion of the Budget.

The General discussion of the Budget took place on the 23RD FEBRUARY. The opposition to the new taxation bills proposed by the Finance member was voiced by non-official members. Messrs. Lalji Narainji and others appealed to the House to reject the measures. The development department also came in for a good deal of adverse criticism.

Next day, the 24th February, Mr. Joseph Baptista led the attack and complained of the executive irresponsibility.

Mr. A. N. Surve warmly acknowledged the Government's response to Non-Brahmans' demands. Other members severely criticised the inclusion of Lee Commission's proposals. Mr. A. M. E. Dehlavi, Minister for Excise, explained Government's policy regarding excise revenue and called attention of the House to the resolution issued on the subject this week.

Mr. Jadav, Minister for Education, who was constantly interrupted, narrated progress of education under stewardship and appealed to the House to view the Stamp Act Amendment Bill with favour as a measure if passed into law would affect only the rich.

On the 25TH FEBRUARY vigorous attacks on the Budget estimates were made by the Swarajists led by Mr. K. F. NARIMAN who criticised the Government policy. The speaker compared the debt position of Bombay with that of other provinces in India and said that while others were regularly decreasing their debts the Bombay Government systematically went on increasing their debts. It was said that India was not fit for home rule, but he would suggest transference of Finance Department to non-officials and they would show in three years that Indians were far better in financial administration than members of the present Government.

Mr. MONTGOMERY, Home Secretary, said that Government had cut down expenditure to the lowest possible limit. It was sheer impossibility to go any further. The incidence of crime in Bombay Presidency, said the speaker, was greater than in England and pointed out that there were no less than 827 murders in 1922, while in England and Wales there were only 60. In face of this, asked the Home Secretary, was it possible to reduce expenditure in Home Department?

Mr. JAYAKAR complained of Government extravagance and characterised the Budget as an adversity Budget.

Hon'ble Mr. H. S. LAWRENCE, Finance Member, replying to the debate attributed most of the criticism to imperfect understanding of the Budget probably owing to its complexity. He repudiated the charges of extravagance and pointed out that the complaints that nothing was done to cultivators were baseless and unsubstantiated by facts. Were no education, communications, medical relief, and sanitation, he asked, for the benefit of cultivators? He would appeal to the members to co-operate with Government in the war they were waging against ignorance and disease.

The general discussion on the Budget concluded and the House adjourned.

Stamp Act Amendment Bill

On the 26TH FEBRUARY the Stamp Act Amendment Bill was formally moved for the first time by the Finance Member. The measure was one of the three of its kind suggested by the Finance Member in his budget proposals for 1925-26, in order to meet the anticipated deficit of 41 lakhs; other two measures being Court Fees Act Amendment Bill and Turf Club Amendment Bill. In introducing the Stamp Act Amendment Bill the Hon'ble Mr. Lawrence explained the objects of the Bill and said that more money was wanted for proposed grants in a generous measure to municipalities and local boards for the cause of education, medical relief and easy communications which were all for the benefit of cultivators.

Consistent with the attitude revealed in the course of the general Budget discussion for the past three days non-official members offered uncompromising opposition to the very principle of extra taxation involved in the Bill. Mr. R. G. P. Pradhan's amendment inserting in the Bill that the whole of the revenue derived under this measure should be devoted for the purposes of education only was ruled out of order by the President on the ground that during the first reading only the principles of the Bill could be discussed and no details.

Mr. C. H. Hidayatullah, Minister for Local Self-Government, said that when Government with a view to economy introduced the photo-copying system in registration Departments members set up a hue and cry on the ground of forced unemployment of people.

Mr. R. G. Pradhan wanted an assurance from Government that revenue from this measure would be wholly ear-marked for nation-building departments only.

Hon'ble Sir Maurice Hayward assured the House that as far as possible Government would give preference to nation-building departments. He appealed to the House to pass the first reading of this Bill and that of the next one so that in the Select Committee they could consider whether extra taxation proposed was or was not for popular benefit.

On the 27TH FEBRUARY the Government sustained a defeat when the Council rejected the first reading of the Stamp Act Amendment Bill by 44 votes to 43. Heated speeches were made from both sides of the House, the non-officials appealing for rejection, and the Government benches appealing to the Ministerial party not to be dictated to by the Swaraj party which had a wrecking policy.

Court Fees Act Amendment Bill.

After a debate, lasting over two and-a-half hours, the Council adjourned further discussion on the first reading of the Court-fees Act Amendment Bill, which was introduced by the Finance Member and which met with strenuous and uncompromising opposition from the non-official benches, on the ground that it was an unbearable burden upon the poor agriculturists.

Demands for Grants.

The Meston Award.

On the 2ND MARCH the officials and non-officials unanimously condemned the attitude of the Finance member of the Government of India in regard to the injustice done to the province of Bombay by the Meston award and its very unjust execution. Mr. Lalji Narayanji proposed an adjournment motion in order to express the disapproval of the Government and the people of Bombay, of the present policy of the Central Government. He said that "the direct policy of Central Government is to kill Bombay industry and see that Bengal flourishes at the expense of other provinces." The Finance Member, Mr. H. S. Lawrence, endorsed the above charge and himself quoted figures and facts to prove that Bombay was done a great injustice. He threatened that steps would be taken to make the Government of India feel the weight of public opinion in Bombay. In order to avoid any feelings of bitterness, he also announced that the further consideration of the Bill to enhance Court Fees was postponed. He appealed to all to consolidate their ranks and to take joint action together in the common cause. The appeal was well responded to, and in a dignified speech Mr. Jaykar associated himself and the Swarajya Party with the Finance Member in condemning the Central Government.

Bombay Development Scandal

Mr. NARIMAN proposed a cut of Rs. 62 lakhs in the Bombay Development Department. Instances after instances were quoted by him by which he proved that corruption of the worst type was going on in the department under the very nose of the great gods of the Directorate. The Hon. Mr. Cowasji Jehangir tried to dodge the issue, with a view to hush up the whole scandal. Sir Lawless Hepper observed : "There was only one person more despicable than the anonymous letter-writer and that was the person who was making base charges against public officials without being able to substantiate them." Mr. Nariman retorted : "he was not making vague charges. He made them openly and without any anonymity. He was prepared to prove that the charges were true, if he were given an opportunity of substantiating them."

On the 5TH MARCH the non-officials scored a victory when Mr. D. B. Adhwani's motion to reduce by Rs. 33,80,000 the total grants of Rs. 2,83,80,000 under the head "Construction of Works in Lloyd Barrage and Other Canals" was carried by 48 votes to 44. The non-officials complained that detailed information had not been given. The Hon. Mr. Cowasji Jahangir, replying on the debate, said that owing to the rise in the price of steel they had to increase expenditure.

The Muddiman Report

10 MARCH 1925

A fiery stream of indignant eloquence swept the floors of the Council on the 10TH MARCH during the debate on Mr. JAYKAR'S motion to adjourn the House to call attention to the highly unsatisfactory nature of the Muddiman Committee's report and recommendations.

Sir Maurice HAYWARD, Home Member, at the very outset announced the Government's intention of not taking part in the debate as their opinions had already been published by the Reforms Committee in the appendices to their report. The Committee themselves were appointed by the Government of India and reported to the same Government, but not to the Bombay Government; but he would not like, however, to hinder a full discussion of this important subject.

Mr. M. R. JAYAKAR the leader of the opposition, then moved for an adjournment. In doing so Mr. Jayakar said that judged by any tests of popular advance the Majority recommendations were highly unsatisfactory. One would employ any tests one liked, whether from the point of view of the Legislatures, Ministers, or popular rights, and the answer was the same, namely that no advance was made in any of those directions. Did the recommendations enlarge the powers of the Legislatures over the Executive Government? Did Ministers get more control over the services, or over the finances of the Presidency? Was the distinction abolished between transferred and reserved departments and greater approximation arrived at between the two? The answer to all these questions was dismal. No doubt the terms of reference to the Committee were extremely limited. Though in a sense, circumscribed by a limited reference, there was no doubt that the Committee, if they were so minded, could have made the most valuable recommendations towards the abolition of many of the defects in the working of the Act and enlarging popular rights by doing so. It seemed to the speaker that the Committee's main concern had been to protect above all the right of the Indian Civil Service. In more than four places, there were references to the interests of those services made with the utmost care and solicitude and towards the end of the report, they wound up by saying that all attempts should be made to protect the rights and privileges of the Indian Civil Service.

The Committee were unnecessarily obsessed with the difficulty relating to the electorate. They forgot that when the Reforms Act of 1832 commenced in England not more than three to four per cent. of the population had vote and the percentage increased slowly right up to 1834. Similarly the Committee failed to realise adequately that Dyarchy had been tried for three years by the utmost enthusiasts of the Reform. Notwithstanding the fair trial given it, Dyarchy had failed. One had only to read the evidence given by the Central Provinces Ministers and one at once realised that the defect of Dyarchy lay in its inherent nature and not merely in the atmosphere in which the experiment was worked. Dealing with the recommendations Mr. Jayakar said that they were extremely unsatisfactory. No important department had been recommended to be transferred. Boilers and Gas, Labour housing, Forests and Fishery, these really did not teach people any responsible self-control or corporate power. Speaking of such departments as were considered in the Bombay Presidency as absolutely worthless, like stationery and stores, Law report, etc., even these, said Mr. Jayakar, had been very cautiously hemmed in by limitations which he characterised as unjustified under the circumstances.

He therefore held the view that in their recommendations the Committee were extremely halting but their recommendations by no means stopped there. In many particulars they were retrograde. Mr. Jayakar cited instances of Presidents of Legislative Bodies having been recommended to be made immune from the jurisdiction and control of High Courts and the non-removal of residential qualifications in the case of citizens of this country except Europeans. Mr. Jayakar amidst cries of 'hear' 'hear' said he did not know what share of the blame attached to the Bombay Government, at least such members of it as formed the minority of that Government. He however congratulated the Indian members of the Bombay Government on their courage and sagacity and uprightness in recommending full provincial autonomy. For their retrograde suggestions he could not think of congratulating the other members of the Government.

They talked freely of electorates, learning lessons of electing representatives with the sole view of securing a return of popular representatives. One might ask the question how were the electorates to learn the lesson? Had they learnt it in every country which enjoyed Self-Government? It had been well said that nothing fitted a man for liberty like the enjoyment of liberty itself. The Government had forgotten that they were not dealing with a subject race, but with a race which had all the consciousness of a civilised and cultured community, and which wanted little or no guidance in the attainment of Self-Government. Indians had enjoyed it before, and although they might have lost it during the interval the consciousness itself would not be long in coming. His complaint was that the present experiment would not produce that consciousness. They had been deliberately torn asunder by the device of a system of Government which kept them in the puddles of opposition. He was glad to read in newspapers that Lord Reading's own bent of mind was towards the Minority recommendations. He could only hope

that the news was true. "If India is to be saved or lost to the British Empire," concluded Mr. Jayakar with great feeling, "depends very largely on the step that H. E. Lord Reading takes to persuade the British Cabinet to take in that direction."

Mr. H. G. PRADHAN said that the Majority recommendations, particularly those relating to the Transferred Subjects, were most unsatisfactory. It was the duty of the Bombay Council to record its protest in no uncertain voice against the narrow illiberalism which was a feature of the recommendations. The speaker condemned the doctrine set up by the Committee that so long as Law and Order remained a reserved subject, land revenue should not be transferred. He pointed out that this was against even the Montford Report.

Moulvi Rafiuddin AHMAD said that he could not understand Mr. Jayakar raising the point of the unsatisfactory nature of the report. He thought Mr. Jayakar and the Swarajists were avowed opponents of Dyarchy and wanted to kill it. First and foremost they must have inter-communal and inter-party unity and then the Government would not dare refuse any reform they demanded.

Mr. A. N. SURVE (Non Brahman), in further supporting the motion observed that if Bombay was given provincial autonomy no harm would arise. He condemned the report if only because it had placed the Ministers in an absolutely unenviable and anomalous position. They were mere advisers to the Governor who could, if he wanted, override their advice. In that case the legislature might pass a vote of censure on the Ministers. Was this the development of a spirit of responsibility?

Mr. D. R. PATIL (Non-Brahman) declared that communal difference were bound to exist till the end of the world. Were they therefore to put off all reforms till the end of the world? No. They must ask for more and more reforms with a united voice, notwithstanding communal difference. Until and unless Dyarchy was done away with, the representatives in the Council could do no real service to their people.

Rai Sahib Dadubhai DESAI condemned the report as recommending retrograde steps. The subordination of Ministers to Civilian Secretaries was sought to be perpetuated by the Committee. He had expected transfer of all departments under the control of the Home Member at present to the control of popular Ministers, so that they could reduce expenditure on them with a view to increase expenditure on Nation-building departments, but he was disappointed.

Mr. JAYAKAR, replying, observed that if amusement should cost Rs. 45,000 of the tax-payers' money he would rather deny himself any amusement. (Laughter in which the officials joined). He agreed with Mr. Patel that notwithstanding communal differences they must take forward steps towards self-Government. Replying to Moulvi Rafiuddin Ahmed, Mr. Jayakar asked the former whether he and other non-officials did not desire to end Dyarchy. Dyarchy was sapping the very foundations of their life. Which Indian could tolerate it? The speaker concluded with an acknowledgment of Sir Maurice Hayward's courtesy in not participating in the debate.

Sir Maurice acknowledged the compliment with a bow. The motion was carried nem con.

Budget Grants—(Contd).

On the 12TH MARCH discussion on budget grants was taken up. Mr. Nariman directed his gunshots against the Department of Industries and pointed out how people, other than Indians when appointed to responsible posts like the Director of Industries, try to give every sort of opportunity to foreign industries in India at the cost of indigenous ones. He urged the Government to take seriously to heart the advice of Mahatma Gandhi to encourage Cottage Industries. Mr. Dev. of Dhule observed that the Minister in charge should take notice of the fact that all the money that was being spent was nothing but waste and the department must be run entirely according to the will of the people. Mr. Jayakar asked the Government what they were going to do with the report of the Rahimtoola Committee. Messrs. Hussenhoy Laljee and G. I. Patel exposed the ignorance of the Hon. Member for Education and showed to him how the industries of match and pottery were being subjected to unfair foreign competition.

After the Industry Department was dismissed the Agricultural Department was ushered in the Council Hall. Messrs Dev and Chaudhari spoke very enthusiastically on various questions relating to agriculture. Mr. Bhopatkar observed that an enquiry should be made into the conditions of the agriculturists. Also the Deccan was gradually decreasing in rain supply, and the Government must take notice of it and teach the farmer to utilise the little rainfall that he gets, as was done in America. He also com-

plained about the insufficient arrangements made to diffuse agricultural knowledge in the peasant class. He concluded by touching the question of milch-cattle.

There was a lively discussion on the grants for the Public Health Department. Mr. Dev proposed a cut of 4 lacs and Mr. Jayakar while speaking on the motion of Mr. Dev questioned the utility of the services of the fat-salaried 'experts' in this department. Mr. Pahlajani further proved the utter uselessness of these so-called experts. The Hon. Mr. Dehalvi and Jadhav tried to explain the Government position. Ultimately the grant was voted.

On the 18TH MARCH an important ruling was given by Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah, the President, during the discussion of a motion by Mr. Pahlajani for the reduction of Rs. 1 lakh from the total demand under the head Medical. Dr. Velkar, which speaking on the motion, referred to the alleged misconduct of certain officials of the Karachi hospital, and one of them discussed the conduct of the officials of another department. Sir Maurice Hayward raised a point of order, and the President, after citing a number of previous rulings on the subject, ruled that except where the salary of any particular official was concerned no member should attack that official, except by a distinct resolution of censure.

The Meston Award.

On the motion of Hon. Mr. H. S. Lawrence, Finance Member, the Council resolved to send a representation to the Government of India on the question of provincial contributions as decided by the adjournment of the 2nd March. In carrying out the motion, the Government had prepared a representation more or less on the lines of the speeches delivered on the last occasion by the mover of the adjournment motion, Mr. Lalji Narainji.

The representation, which was placed before the Council for its approval, expressed its conviction that grave injustice had been done to Bombay by the Meston Settlement. The case against the settlement was based on two distinct grounds, namely (1) that the distribution of the surplus revenue assigned to the provinces of India, over and above provincial revenue existing at the time of the Reforms, was determined in a haphazard manner, and bore no relation to the needs of the provinces and total taxation derived from those provinces, and (2) that this haphazard distribution was founded upon the application of federal principles of finance, which had not been adopted in any other federal government in the world. The position of Bombay was compared with other provinces in the matter of taxation and it was stated that Bombay was the most highly taxed province in India. An amplification of the arguments of the Hon. H. S. Lawrence and Mr. Lalji Narainji constituted the main features of the representation.

Mr. LAWRENCE, having moved that the draft representation be approved, several speakers rose to support it. Chief among the speakers were Messrs. Lalji Narainji and Mr. Jayakar. The former suggested certain changes in Mr. Lawrence's draft representation, where a reference had been made to federal as well as State income-taxes in Canada and the United States. Mr. Lawrence agreed to the change suggested.

Mr. M. R. JAYAKAR, leader of the Swarajya party, said that while he had no desire to obstruct his colleagues of the other parties if they wanted to send a representation in the name of the House, he was bound to tell them that personally he had no faith or confidence in the Government of India. Was it the first time that a representation to that Government had been made on behalf of Bombay? They should not forget that the Central Government had been treating the Bombay representation with scant courtesy. He urged sterner and stronger measures. He was sure that ere long the Bombay Government would find out that mere representations would not do, and that sterner measures ought to have been adopted. The Bombay Government should show that Bombay was by no means willing to face any new taxation.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Indian Match Industry.

When the grant for the Industries Department came up for discussion, several members accused the Minister of want of any knowledge in matters industrial, and a motion was proposed reducing the grant by Rs. 1,000.

Mr. Hoosainbhai LALJI said the Minister did not know anything about the match or any other industry. There were, he said, four match factories in the Bombay Presidency, one of which at Ahmedabad had been struggling for existence for the last 20 years. They were importing into Bombay logs of wood from Siberia, as it was found that steamer freight from Siberia to Bombay cost less than the railway freight on wood from Northern India to Bombay. That was not all. An American Syndicate with a capital of about £2 millions had started a big factory at Ambarnath, near Bombay, and were going to build

factories at Karachi, Calcutta and Rangoon, not with a view to supplying India's needs, but for the purpose of killing the existing factories in India. This syndicate, he said, had already taken in hand the match industries of Sweden, Czechoslovakia and China, though they failed to secure a footing in Japan, owing to the Japanese Government's resistance. That American match trust had cornered a chemical most essential in match manufacture which could not be bought except through that syndicate. They were also offering higher wages to experienced Indian workmen from existing match factories. He urged that the Government of India should intervene.

Education Minister's Policy Criticised.

On the 14TH MARCH discussion was continued on Mr. P. G. Joshi's motion brought forward the day before to reduce the total demand for education by Rs. 1 lakh. The mover made it plain that it was not to be considered as a motion of censure on the Minister for Education. Mr. M. R. JAYAKAR, while agreeing with the mover that it was not a censure motion, severely criticised the Minister and told him that on occasion the Swaraj party, which had been vilified by the Minister on all and sundry occasions and which had been represented by the same Minister as something horrible even to think of joining, was now standing between him and the vote of censure. He accused the Minister of humiliating his office by acting like a paid whip of the Government, instead of acting like the other two Ministers.

The Hon. Mr. B. V. JADHAV, Minister for Education, justified his non-Brahmin policy which had been questioned by some speakers. He was constrained to treat the motion as a censure motion, but he was not afraid of it. His conscience told him that he was not a failure. He knew that the majority of the house was with him. Speaking of the non-Brahmin policy he said that they were actuated by the same motive as the Swarajists and others, namely, looking after the country's advancement. If they did not agree with the Swarajist policy of obstruction they were not wholly supporters of the Government either. He recalled instances when non-Brahmins even in that session had voted against the Government.

Mr. A. N. SURVE, referring to the non-Brahmin policy, said he strongly resented any patronisation. As a self-respecting party they could not and would not stand any patronisation. If the House felt that the Minister was a failure, then let it not waste public money on him.

The Hon. Mr. JADHAV, replying to the debate, said that if the motion were carried, he was willing to lay down office. He then detailed the number of improvements he had introduced in the field of education.

Mr. JOSHI said he was satisfied that the Hon. Mr. Jadhav was seriously engaged in satisfying national aspirations and he withdrew his motion.

The House then proceeded to discuss other reduction motions. All reduction motions moved were either withdrawn or defeated. A motion refusing the grant under European Education (Reserved) was pressed to a division and lost. Another motion to reduce police expenditure shared a similar fate.

Mr. K. F. Nariman moved a reduction of Rs. 10 lakhs from the total Police grant. In doing so he drew attention to the Bawla murder which occurred soon after sunset in a prominent locality near the residence of the Commissioner of Police.

The President, intervening, said that he would not allow reference to be made to a case sub-judice. The President set the guillotine in motion at 5 o'clock and put to the vote the total demands. In five minutes all the motions for grants were carried.

The Bombay Rent Act.

On the 16TH MARCH an official Bill was introduced in the Council by the Hon. Mr. Cowasji Jehangir to amend the Bombay Rent Act in respect of residential premises which expires by the end of 1925. The Bill, which passed its first reading, seeks in a restricted measure to extend the provision of the expiring Act only in the case of residential premises, the parts applying to non-residential premises having expired in October last.

Mr. K. F. Nariman's amendment to the principle of the Bill extending protection to non-residential buildings also was ruled out of order by the President on the ground that it sought to go beyond the scope of the Bill. The President also explained that inasmuch as the House refused leave to Mr. Addyman at the last Poona session to introduce a measure on the lines of Mr. Nariman's amendment, the latter should be deemed as altogether separate from the scope of the present Bill.

The members then criticised the Bill generally and condemned it for not going far enough. Mr. M. R. Jayakar, leader of the Swaraj party, while supporting the restricted

Bill observed that the Swaraj party did not often find itself in a position to support a Government measure. He, however, thought that the Bill, whose principle he supported, should be radically altered in the select committee.

The first reading was then agreed to. The Swarajists having consented to work on the select committee.

On the 18TH MARCH the Council gave leave to introduce the following new Bills : A Bill to enable the Hindus of the Province of Sind to restrict themselves to Monogamous Marriages—by D. B. Adwani. A Bill further to amend the Bombay Land Revenue Code, 1879—by R. D. Shinde. A Bill further to amend the Bombay Town Planning Act—by L. R. Bhopatkar.

Mr. BHOPATKAR'S Bill to alter the constitution and to widen the powers of the municipalities was the first private Bill to come before the House for its first reading. This Bill from its very inception, sustained a strong opposition from the Government. Even the leave for its introduction was very grudgingly and ungraciously given by the Government in the last Poona session.

Mr. Bhopatkar's intention in moving that Bill was to meet the growing public demand to alter the constitution of the municipalities in the Presidency including the Province of Sind in such a way that the municipalities should be really useful to the public and free from official control. This Bill proposes to make all city municipalities wholly elected, the nomination being confined to 1/5 of the whole number of Councillors. There is a clause in the Bill intending to do away with the necessity of securing the previous sanction of the Collector for the discharge of certain functions.

The Hon. Member for Local Self-Government opposed the Bill on the ground that the Bill was of a very sweeping character and also the Government was very shortly going to introduce a similar Bill. Mr. D. R. Patil moved an amendment that the consideration of the Bill be postponed till the next session of the Council. The amendment was carried.

Amendment of Standing Orders.

After the private Bills were disposed off the second reading of motions to amend Standing Orders, which had been referred to Select Committee, were taken-up. The Select Committee had recommended that "provided the President permits, a member may move any of the resolutions that stand in his name, whatever their order on the agenda be, but no permission shall be given unless 24 hours' notice has been given to the Government member in charge, if he so desires." It was a very useful amendment but the Government benches opposing it very strongly it was rejected by 40 votes against 30.

Next day the 19TH MARCH, the last day of the Session, other motions to amend standing orders were taken up. Mr. Dev of Dhulia moved that the 12 days that were allotted to the Budget discussion should be considered very important and sacred and in those days no questions should be answered, or adjournment motions be moved. His intention in moving that amendment was to enable the House to consider the whole Budget. But the amendment was lost. Several other useful amendments proposed by the Swarajists were discussed and rejected by the House.

There were nearly 150 resolutions on the agenda paper of which only three could come before the House. One of them was to the effect to prohibit fishing in the Sabarmati river. The Government assured Mr. Swaminarayan that it would consider the question sympathetically upon which he withdrew his resolution.

The other and the most important resolution regarding pay of Bombay peons stood in the name of Mr. Bole and was carried without a division even though the government benches opposed it strongly. Mr. Jayakar paid tribute to the loyalty, integrity and patience of the Bombay peons and supported the resolution on behalf of the Swarajya Party.

The Council session was then prorogued by order of His Excellency the Governor.

The Swaraj Party--Review of Council Work

"True to the wishes of the people they have to the best of their lights offered a fight to the Government at every turn and corner and have often come off successful after a hard fought struggle".

In those words the Swarajya Party in the Bombay Legislative Council concluded its report of one year's work in the Council. The report which was submitted to the electorates of the Bombay Legislature is a closely printed document of 44 pages recording in detail the part played by the party independently as well as in collaboration with the other parties in the Council in the legislative work of the presidency. The Bombay Council

Swarajya Party consisted of 23 Swarajists and 11 Independents and thus commanded "a trifle less than a third of total of 111 members who compose the Council"; about a third of the total forms the Government block while the remaining third is composed of the non-Brahmin party. The report claims for the Swarajya Party that it has creditably acquitted itself of the trust reposed in it by the electorates. It was not, however, able to oppose the Government as vigorously as sister branches could do in C. P. and Bengal Councils. Explaining the circumstances that led to this position the report chronicles the fact that the Bombay Legislature is more heterogeneous than any other Council in India and consists of representatives of four different parts namely Maharashtra, Guzerat, Sind and Karnatic which differ from each other not only in language and traditions, but even in their stages of political advance. The report says that the result is that the representatives from backward districts are still not free from official control and are unable to realise the significance of the Swarajist policy and programme. Referring to the non-Brahmin party which, the report says, invariably decides the vote of the Council, the Swarajya Party complains of the former party's persistence in not even giving an opportunity to the Swarajists to understand them by joint deliberations at least on important questions. The non-Brahmin party could not be persuaded, continues the report, to lend a strong and vigorous hand to the Nationalists in their struggle for political freedom. In the face of all disappointing factors the Swarajists and Independents have had to work. It is further claimed and this in light thereof that their work has to be appraised by the electorates. The report also proudly chronicles the fact of the place of honour as the leader of opposition having been by common consent assigned to the Swarajist leader, Mr. Jayakar, and also the fact of the party members being clad in pure simple khadder.

The Autumn Session

POONA—20TH JULY 1925.

The Autumn Session of the Bombay Legislative Council commenced at Poona on the 20th July. After the swearing-in of new members the Council proceeded with the consideration of official Bills. The Government intimated the withdrawal of the Land Revenue Bill. Consideration of the Statistics Bill was postponed.

A resolution eulogising the services of the late Mr. C. R. Das was then moved, members of all the different parties and the President associating themselves with the spirit of the motion, which was carried unanimously.

The Council then proceeded with the second reading of the Bill for the Prevention of Adulteration of Food. Mr. Nariman urged the inclusion of a provision to include imported tinned food in the operation of the Act. Mr. Nariman's proposition did not meet with support.

On the 22ND JULY the Council passed the Adulteration of Food Act. The Bill to amend the Bombay Municipal Act which was under discussion and the clause regarding the appointment of a Municipal Commissioner was vigorously debated, Mr. Nariman moving an amendment suggesting the transfer of the powers of appointment and the removal of the Municipal Commissioner to the Municipality. The discussion was resumed next day, the 23RD JULY when the Council passed the third reading of the Bill to Amend the City of Bombay Municipal Act.

Co-operative Societies Bill.

The Minister for Excise then moved the second reading of the Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Law relating to Co-operative Societies in the Bombay Presidency. The object of the Bill was to facilitate the formation of co-operative societies for the promotion of thrift, self-help, and mutual aid, particularly among the agriculturists, in order to bring about better living, better business, and better methods of production.

There were 126 amendments notified. One of these suggested that the Bill be returned to the Select Committee to consider the question of popular control of the societies and a reduction of the autocratic powers of the registrar. The Government opposed the amendment, which was lost, and the second reading was passed.

On the 24TH JULY the debate on the Bill and an amendment to the clause relating to exemption from income-tax, court fees, etc., was adopted proposing that the Government should give loans to registered societies, or guarantee the payment of interest on debentures issued by them.

With regard to the clause relating to contributions to a charitable purpose, it was agreed that, with the approval of the Bombay Central Co-operative Institute, and after the stipulations regarding the reserve fund had been satisfied, a society might set aside a sum not exceeding 20 per cent. of its net profits, and utilise from time to time the whole of such a sum in contributing to any public or co-operative purpose, or to a charitable purpose, as defined in Section II of the Charitable Endowments Act of 1890.

On the 25TH JULY after a protracted discussion lasting nearly three days, the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Co-operative Societies in the Bombay Presidency passed its third reading.

Bombay Rent Act.

The Bill to further amend the Bombay Rent Act, 1918, was then presented for its second reading. The report of the Select Committee, consisting of 17 members, showed that eight members wrote minutes of dissent.

Mr. Surve's motion for the return of the Bill to the Select Committee was rejected, and the House proceeded with the second reading of the Bill.

On the 28TH JULY the report of the Select Committee on the Rent Act Bill was again taken up. Clause II of the Bill, which was altered by Mr. Nariman's amendment, extended the life of the Act till 1928. It was sought to be amended by Mr. Surve's motion that the Act should be made applicable only to tenements, the rents of which ranged between Rs. 8 and Rs. 150 instead of Rs. 85 as stated in the Bill. The amendment failed when put to the vote.

Another unsuccessful amendment, which took up a good part of the day's debate, was one which sought to decontrol the rents of chawls and dwelling houses erected by employees.

Clause II of the Bill, amending Section I of the second Bombay Rent Act, was then adopted.

Consideration of Clause III was postponed, and the amendment of Dr. Velkar to insert in Clause IV, a provision to safe-guard workmen against ejectment when a lock-out or strike had been declared, was forced to a division and declared lost.

On the 29TH JULY after some minor verbal amendments had been duly incorporated in the measure, the Co-operative Societies Bill was read a third time and passed into law.

The Council next proceeded to consider the Bill to amend the Bombay Rent Act clause by clause.

Several members took part in the debate caused by Mr. Nariman's amendment, which sought to re-adjust the sliding scale of the increase in rents during the years 1926 and 1927. The amendment proposed a reduction

of the increase allowed by the report of the Select Committee from 30 per cent. to 20 for the first year, and from 40 per cent. to 25 per cent. for the second year.

The Government said that the increase of 30 per cent. was allowed as no increments in rents had been allowed for the last ten years, and the measure would prevent land-lords to be exacting or to profiteer in a commodity required by all classes of the community; yet it would give them a normal increase, so that tenants might not take undue advantage of the protection afforded by the Bill under consideration.

The remaining clauses were incorporated after some discussion and alterations. Rental for houses occupied after 1926 were granted an annual increase of 10 per cent. The second reading of the Bill was left over till next day to enable the Government to examine the Bill as amended.

The discussion of the first reading of the Bill to amend the Bombay Smoke Nuisance Act was not finished when the Council rose for the day.

On the 30TH JULY after consequential amendments the Bill amending the Rent Act passed the second and third readings.

The Bombay Port Trust Act was so amended that in future there should be no discrimination in the liability of the trustees between goods discharged by day or by night. Also the trustees were not to be held responsible if cargo was not removed by owners within 11 days of its landing in the Board's premises.

The Bombay Cotton Industry.

Mr. S. K. BOLE was then allowed to move the adjournment of the Council for the discussion of a matter of public importance. He submitted that in view of the grave situation in which the Bombay cotton textile industry found itself, and the possible effect of the decision of the Millowners' Association to reduce the wages of their workmen, which would affect 150,000 operatives of Bombay and their families, and also the effect of this situation on the welfare of the Presidency as a whole, the Governor-in-Council would be pleased to place the gravity of the situation before the Governor-General-in-Council, urging him to take such steps as would bring about immediate relief to the mill industry and the operatives working therein.

Mr. JAYAKAR, on behalf of his party, supported the motion, declaring that the Swaraj party had now vindicated their position that they were not subsidised by capitalists, as was the general belief some time back, but were some party standing between Labour and Capital. He asked the mill-owners if they had really investigated the question thoroughly, and if they had not found it reasonable to reduce profits and the salaries of their highly paid officers before deciding to cut down the wages of the mill operatives. He thanked the mill-owners' representatives for urging the Government to make a representation to the Government of India to take this Industry in hand.

The FINANCE MEMBER said that the Bombay Government was placed in a difficult position. The abolition of the cotton excise, he said, must be debated with sober deliberation, and not with picturesque epithets. He believed that it was established that the mill industry was in a bad condition, and the loss on the citizens of Bombay would probably be not less than Rs. 10 crores. He reminded the House that the ques-

tions of exchange and currency were most complex, and it was unfortunate that the policy of the Government of India was accused of moral depravity. According to him, the millowners had not put forward their case with all the detail which they no doubt possessed, and that, whenever their allegations against Japanese competition were contradicted, the Millowners' Association did not move sufficiently to prove their case. He advised the establishment of a system of commercial intelligence. He refuted the charge of mismanagement levelled against the Bombay millowners, but he believed that the abolition of the excise duty would not put the mills on their feet, though it would serve as a palliative for the reduction of a part of their losses. As regards the wages of labour, he said that a cut of 11½ per cent. would be only a very minor palliative of the evil, as it would amount to only Rs. 70 lakhs, or a little more than 1 per cent. of the value of the total out-turn of cloth. Whether Japanese imports should be welcomed or not he left the House to judge. He also advised both the millowners and the advocates of labour to ask for an enquiry by the Tariff Board.

After the Government had expressed its desire to mitigate the difficulty of both the labourers and the capitalists, the motion was carried unanimously.

The Act to impose a tax on totalisator betting passed the first reading and a Select Committee to report thereon was appointed.

Abkari Act Amendment Bill.

On the 31ST JULY after question time, the first reading of the Bill further to amend the Bombay Abkari Act of 1878 was moved. The proposed amendment makes it illegal for any Club to sell liquor without a license, and enables the Government to obtain fuller control over the consumption of foreign liquor. Very little opposition was offered, and the Bill passed into law.

The Bill to give wider power in the management of Municipal affairs in certain cities was then introduced. The Bill was read for the first time, and referred to a Select Committee.

Transfer of Improvement Trust.

On the 5TH AUGUST Khan Bahadur Shaikh Ghulam Husain HIDAYATULLAH moved the first reading of the Bill to transfer the powers and duties of the Trustees for the improvement of the City of Bombay to the Corporation and to vest the property and rights vested in the Trustees in the Corporation. In explaining the provisions of the Bill the Minister emphasised that in order to prevent speculation in prices of land the new Board would determine the price of land while considering a scheme and not when the scheme was finally sanctioned.

After further discussion the Bill passed the first reading and the proposition to refer the Bill to Select Committee was also passed.

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Gulam Husain HIDAYATULLAH next moved a Bill to amend the Bombay Local Boards Act, 1923. He explained that the need for the Bill was due to the discrepancies in the elections brought to light in the past on account of the defective wording of the Act. This Bill also passed the first reading.

The Council also passed the third reading of the amendments to certain Standing Orders.

Children's Act Amendment.

Sir Maurice HAYWARD then moved a Bill amending the Bombay Children's Act, 1924. Five new clauses had been added to the Act making it penal to be drunk while in charge of a child, to give intoxicating liquors to a child, to sell tobacco or any smoking mixture to a child or young person, to incite a child to bet or borrow and to take pawn from a child.

The Home Member pointed out that the Bill had been brought forward in fulfilment of a promise made to the House.

The first reading of the Bill was passed, and on the motion of the Home Member it was referred to select committee.

Mr. Lalubhai SAMALDAS moved that a certain sum be appropriated from the item "Miscellaneous" for the purpose of revising the pay of village establishments in Sind. A lively debate ensued during which the non-officials demanded from the Govt. a definite assurance to the effect that the Govt. would put an end to the "Rasai" and "lato" systems in vogue in Sind.

The Home Member explained the point of view of the Government and gave an assurance that if public co-operation were forthcoming, and if the House would help in putting into effect the recommendations of the "Rasai" Committee the Government would do all they could to end the "Rasai" and "lato" systems. The demand was then granted.

Among the other demands moved one relating to the purchase of a plot of land near Jacob Circle, Bombay, for Rs. 1,54,945 for the purpose of further strengthening the position of the police so that, they could meet disturbances during times of industrial unrest was sanctioned.

On the 11TH AUGUST the Council resumed discussion on the Bill to amend the Bombay Village Police Act of 1867. The first reading of the Bill was passed and on the motion of the mover referred to a Select Committee.

Bombay Town Planning Act

Mr. L. B. BHOPATKAR then moved the first reading of a Bill further to amend the Bombay Town Planning Act of 1915. According to the statement of objects and reasons the Act had proved a source of danger to the rights of those persons whose lands happen to be included in the town planning scheme as the Arbitrator was invested with autocratic powers. The Tribunal of Arbitration was a mere tool in the hands of the Arbitrator. The whole Act was so conceived and framed as to benefit the local authority at the cost of the landholders within its jurisdiction. All sorts of restrictions are imposed upon the landholders without corresponding liabilities put upon the local authority concerned. Mr Bhopatkar gave concrete instances from what had taken place in Poona.

Mr. HIDAYATULLAH, Minister, raised a point of order as to whether the local Legislature had the power to add powers to the appellate jurisdiction of the High Court and whether such a power did not constitute interference with Acts of Parliament.

Mr. M. R. JAYAKAR, leader of the Swaraj Party, observed that the Bill proposed to add certain powers to the appellate jurisdiction of the High Court. A mere addition of such powers could not be deemed as affecting any Act of Parliament. If the Bill had aimed at taking away from the appellate jurisdiction of the High Court any of the powers vested in it

by Letters Patent of Parliament, then the Bill could be considered as being out of order.

Sir Maurice HAYWARD held that Mr. Jayakar's interpretation was not correct and that whether what the Bill had proposed was a mere addition or a subtraction of powers, it nevertheless affected the Act, and as such the local Legislature could not deal with such a Bill.

The PRESIDENT said a similar point of order had been raised in connection with the Bombay Children's Bill and was referred to the Governor-General. Mr. Bhopatkar's Bill to amend the Bombay Town-Planning Act of 1915 was referred to the Governor-General subsequently and yet sanction was given without any reference whatsoever to any part of the Bill. It was common knowledge that before sanction was given to any Bill the Governor-General usually referred it to the head of the Department concerned. It was, therefore, a matter of surprise that sanction should have been given to Mr. Bhopatkar's Bill, which contained a debatable provision similar to the one contained in the Children's Bill and referred to the Governor-General. He (the President) could either rule the whole Bill as out of order, or allow the House to proceed with the consideration of the first reading of the Bill, and the point of order could be considered before the Bill came up for the second reading. He preferred to adopt the latter course.

The discussion of the Bill was then continued and the first reading being put to the vote was lost.

The Swarajists' Withdrawal.

A meeting of the Swarajist members was held on the 14th August to protest against the treatment they were receiving in the Council, particularly the way in which the non-Brahmins supported the Government in refusing the formal motions for the introduction of Bills by Swarajist members at the meeting of the Council on the 13th August. After Mr. Joshi's Bill was defeated on this day (13th) he refused to ask for leave for any more Bills, and his example was followed by other Swaraj Party members. Since then they apparently decided to take no more part in that session.

On the 14TH AUGUST, when the Council met, the House proceeded to discuss non-official resolutions of general public interest. Mr. P. V. Joshi, who was the first on the list of resolutions, refused to move any of his three resolutions, and his example was followed by Mr. Dave, who had 10 resolutions in his name.

On the 15TH AUGUST in pursuance of the decision arrived at the day before the Swarajist members did not put the questions of which they had given notice, nor did they move the resolutions in their names. One or two members of the non-Brahmin party also joined in the chorus of "I do not move the resolution, Sir."

The business of the Bombay Council was finished on this day primarily on account of the Swarajist members declining to move the resolutions that stood in their name. As the Governor had not intimated the proroguing of the House, the Council was adjourned sine die.

The Swarajists' Reasons for Withdrawal.

In announcing their decision not to take part in the proceedings of the

Bombay Legislative Council the Swarajist members issued a statement criticising the attitude of the non-Brahmin and Sind Moslem members. They state that they had given support to the non-Brahmins and Sind Moslems whenever their motions were in danger, but the result had been that the Swarajists had come to be regarded by those two parties as powerful levers for obtaining from the Government one concession after another, either communal or personal. The Government had gone on distributing their patronage among persons representing those parties in a manner which had had the effect of winning them over to the side of the Government.

The Swarajists did not desire to be converted into the unwilling instruments of communal or personal aggrandisement. The Government did not appear to be willing to accord to the Swaraj Party the position of respect and dignity which it deserved, by reason of its work and importance. Their one effort had been to try by all means, fair or foul, with the aid of the non-Brahmins and Sind Moslems, to defeat the Swarajists. Constituted as they were, the Swarajists were powerless to meet the tactics of the Government. They had, therefore, been compelled to resolve not to take part in the deliberations of the House, so that, with their withdrawal, the other section of the House which had so far remained inactive, would be thrown on their own resources, and would come to occupy their merited position, commensurate with their intelligence, strength and importance.

Concluding, the statement observes : " We are aware that this step involves the immediate sacrifice of minor advantages to the public, but this is inevitable. We are awaiting further development, and we venture to assure our constituents that all steps will be taken which are demanded by their self-respect and the dignity, of which we regard ourselves the custodians."

The October Session

POONA—21ST OCTOBER 1925.

The first meeting of the third session of the Bombay Legislative Council was held on the 21st October at the Council Hall, Poona, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah presiding. Curiosity as to what the Swarajists would do during this session, whether they would continue the tactics of non-participation in the proceedings, or revert to the old method of responsive co-operation, had brought in a good number of visitors. When question-time came the Swarajist members did not put the questions they had sent in nor read the answers which had been prepared and printed in the list of questions and answers. They acted in pursuance of the decision they arrived at their meeting the day before to continue the policy of non-participation which they inaugurated during the closing days of the last session.

On the motion of the Home Member the consideration of the first reading of the Bill to provide for the collection of statistical information for public purposes was postponed.

Betting Tax Bill.

The Finance Member moved the second reading of the Bill to impose a tax on totalisator betting and presented the report of the Select Committee thereon. The Select Committee had, by a majority, accepted the preamble of the Bill as well as the rate of tax recommended, namely, four per cent.

The motion for the second reading of the Bill was put to the vote and carried. Amendments to the Bill were then taken up for consideration.

Mr. S. K. Bole supported the Bill on the ground that the rate of tax proposed therein would go to add to the revenues of the Government. He suggested a rate much higher than that provided in the Bill.

Mr. C. N. Wadia, representative of the Millowners' Association, moved an amendment to the effect that the maximum rate of tax fixed by the Bill should be reduced to 2½ per cent, inasmuch as the Turf Club was a charitable institution and its capacity for doing charity would be crippled by the high rates of tax. After some discussion the amendment was lost.

Mr. H. M. Rahimtulla moved an amendment with the object that the tax proposed to be levied should really be a tax on the Turf Club and not on the public. The amendment was to provide that 90 per cent. of all the monies paid into the totalisator should be distributed among the winners. The amendment was lost.

The Home Member explained the point of view of the Government as being one of discouragement of gambling. The idea of a third enclosure did not originate in the Government but in the Turf Club; but when the third enclosure was started it was found helpful in suppressing the bucket shops and betting outside. He then moved the third reading of the Bill which was passed.

Stock Exchange Reform.

On the 22ND OCTOBER Mr. H. S. Lawrence, Finance Member, moved the first reading of the Bill to regulate and control certain contracts for the purchase and sale of securities in the City of Bombay.

The object of the Bill is that Government should take authority to enforce such rules as they may consider necessary for the interests of the public. This measure is in pursuance of the recommendations of the Stock Exchange Committee. Subject to the sanction of the Governor-in-Council, a stock exchange may make rules for the regulation and control of all transactions in securities other than ready delivery contracts. The Bill further provides the Governor-in-Council with power to refuse to sanction any or all of the rules and to add to, amend, vary, or rescind any of the rules. The first reading of the Bill was carried. The Bill was then referred to a Select Committee.

Children's Amendment Act.

Sir Maurice Hayward, Home Member, moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the Bombay Children's Act, 1924. Every one of the amendments of which notice had been given, was lost. A division was demanded on one of the amendments and the result was that the Government got a clear majority of 33 to 7. The Bill was read a third time and passed.

The Bill further to amend the Bombay Port Trust Act of 1879 was read a third time and passed.

Municipal Act Amendment Bill.

The Bill to give wider powers in the management of municipal affairs in certain cities was read a second time. As laid down in the statement of objects and reasons the principal object of the Bill is to provide a more adequate basis for municipal administration in the large cities of the Bombay Presidency. The Bombay District Municipal Act of 1901 applies to all municipalities in the Presidency, except the Municipal Corporation of the City of Bombay, and it has been felt each year with increasing force that the same Act cannot adequately provide for the needs of the larger and the smaller municipalities. Under the same Act, save where a chief officer or a municipal commissioner has been appointed the executive

administration centres in the managing and other committees. This may still be possible in the smaller municipalities, and in these the President may still be able to supervise and control the Municipal staff, and the Municipal Committee to perform the functions of an executive body. But in the large cities the Municipality can do little more than determine questions of policy. The Committees can exercise only a general control over the Municipal staff. It is therefore necessary to define with greater clearness the powers of the executive and to secure proper supervision and control by the appointment of a responsible executive officer, with clearly defined statutory powers, at the head of the Municipal staff.

An amendment was moved by Mr. R. G. PRADHAN to the effect that for the words, "the member of wards to be constituted for Mahomedans, non-Mahomedans and depressed classes," the words, "the constitution of wards, including a special ward for depressed classes," be substituted. The amendment was then put to the vote and lost.

On the 23RD OCTOBER the discussion on the Municipal Bill was resumed and considered clause by clause. Mr. A. N. Surve proposed an amendment that a person who pays, or promises to pay, any person whomsoever on account of the conveyance of any elector to or from any place for the purpose of recording his vote, as well as the person who hires, employs, borrows, or uses for the purposes of the election any boat, vehicle, or animal usually kept for letting on hire shall be deemed to have committed corrupt practice. Mr. Surve explained how in the past rich, but not deserving candidates had got into power by spending money freely and profusely for the conveyance of the voters to the polling booths and how specially in Bombay during elections corruption used to be rife. On the Minister in charge of the Bill accepting the clauses proposed they became part of the Bill.

On the 24TH OCTOBER Mr. A. N. Surve moved an amendment to the effect that a municipality should have power to regulate and restrict the slaughter of animals. The Minister in charge raised a point of order and held that the amendment proposed an addition of powers which did not fall within the jurisdiction of a municipality. Besides, the Government of India had not approved of the amendment. The President ruled the amendment out of order.

On the 26TH OCTOBER Mr. R. G. Pradhan moved an amendment to the clauses giving power to the District Magistrate to suspend by means of an order the execution of any order or resolution of a municipality and prohibit the doing of anything which is about to be done, or is being done by, or on behalf of, a municipality, and is doing, or is likely to cause, injury or annoyance to the public, or to lead to a breach of the peace, or is unlawful. The Collector is required by the Bill to forward such orders to the Commissioner and to the municipality affected thereby. The Commissioner is on his part required to submit to the Government a report of every such case.

Mr. Pradhan complained that in the past Collectors had interfered too often and for insufficient or no reasons with the working municipalities and that the Bill under discussion had left the autocracy of the Collectors unimpaired. It was, however, unreasonable and inexpedient to disarm the Collectors of all powers of interference inasmuch as the maintenance of law and order and the prevention of a breach of the peace were considerations of paramount importance in all administrations. It was but meet, therefore, that the Collector in his capacity as District Magistrate should have power to issue provisional orders.

The amendment was eventually lost. The Bill was read a third time and passed.

Mr. Hidayatullah then moved the second reading of the Bill to transfer the powers and duties of the trustees for the improvement of the City of Bombay and to vest the property and rights vested in the trusts in the Municipal Corporation of the City of Bombay. The Minister also presented the report of the select committee.

Both the motions were assented to by the Council.

Improvement Trust Bill.

On the 27TH OCTOBER the consideration of the Improvement Trust Transfer Bill was proceeded with.

Mr. A. N. Surve moved an amendment to provide for the representation of the poorer and working classes on the committee to be constituted under the Bill. The amendment also sought to deprive the mercantile classes of the representation proposed to be accorded to them. The amendment was lost.

Mr. Joseph Baptista moved the inclusion of the following clause: "The powers conferred by, and the duties imposed under, this Act on the Committee shall be exercised and performed by the Committee, subject to the general control of the Board."

The Minister in charge of the Bill agreed to the inclusion of this clause.

Mr. H. M. Rahimtullah moved the addition of the following clause: "The Board shall take over such of the development schemes of the Corporation as the Corporation may decide to transfer to the Board, subject to such financial adjustments and conditions as may be agreed upon, and on such decision being communicated to the Board all the formalities required under this Act before a scheme can be undertaken by the Board shall be deemed to have been observed." The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

On the 28TH OCTOBER Sir Vasantrao Dabholkar moved an amendment that all references pending before the Tribunal of Appeal be transferred to the High Court. After some discussion the amendment was lost.

Mr. Hidayatulla, Minister, moved a Government amendment to Section 10 which made municipal commissioners ex-officio members of the Improvement Trust Committee. The number of nominated members was increased to four by adding one representative of labour from among the members of the Municipal Corporation.

All other amendments were gone through, but the third reading was postponed for purposes of consequential amendments.

Official Bills Passed.

On the 29TH OCTOBER the Bombay Port Trust (Amendment) Bill was read a third time and passed, the most important of the amendments made being that goods, if not removed in seven days after landing, should remain on the premises of the Port Trust at the risk and expense of the owners.

The Bill to impose a tax on totalisator betting was read a third time and passed after being amended to the effect that the Act should come into force in Bombay during the ensuing racing season in December.

The Major Municipalities Bill was then taken up. A number of verbal and consequential amendments were moved and passed. The Bill was read a third time and passed.

The Finance Member then moved the second reading of the Stock Exchange Control Bill and presented the report of the Select Committee. In doing so the Finance Member said that the report was unanimous. It did not mean, as it might strike some people, that the Committee did not go fully into the merits of the Bill. The views of the Bombay Native Shares and Stock Brokers' Association were heard. The Bill had been so

amended by the Select Committee as to give power to the Government to extend the Act to cities other than Bombay.

Mr. Joseph Baptista congratulated the Government on the introduction of such a useful and long-needed measure. The Bill would put an end to what had long been one of the greatest scandals of the City of Bombay.

The Bill was then read a third time and passed.

Improvement Trust Bill.

A number of amendments to the Bombay Improvement Trust Transfer Bill were moved on this day and passed.

Mr. Hidayatullah, Minister, thereupon moved that the Bill be read a third time. In doing so he said that the Bill had been framed and brought forward in response to an insistent public demand for years. He hoped that the day would soon come when the Improvement Trust would merge completely into the Bombay Municipal Corporation. Many members congratulated the Minister on initiating such a bold measure in deference to public opinion. The Bill was then read a third time and passed.

Bombay Municipal Act (City and District).

Mr. Hidayatullah then moved the first reading of the Bill to amend the Bombay District Municipal Act, 1901. The objects of the Bill are to provide that (1) persons sentenced by a criminal court to imprisonment or whipping for an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term exceeding six months, or to transportation, such sentence not having been subsequently reversed or quashed, should be relieved from the disqualification on the expiry of the sentence or by an order of the Government in that behalf (2) persons dismissed from Government service, such dismissal having been notified in the "Bombay Government Gazette," and those being pleaders whose sanad had been withdrawn by the High Court, should no longer be disqualified from being members of a municipality.

The Bill was read a second and third time and passed.

The Bill to amend the Bombay Village Panchayats Act, 1920, and the Bill further to amend the Bombay Local Boards Act, 1923, on the same lines as the previous measure, were read three times and passed.

The first reading of the Bill to amend the City of Bombay Municipal Act, 1883, was moved. The object of the measure is to provide that persons sentenced by a criminal court to imprisonment or whipping for an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term exceeding six months, or to transportation, such sentence not having been subsequently reversed, or quashed, should be relieved from the disqualification on the expiry of the sentence, or by an order of the Government in that behalf. The Bill was, however, read the first time and referred to a select committee.

On the 30TH OCTOBER, on the motion of the Finance Member, the Council approved of the report of the Committee on Public Accounts for the year 1923-24 and recommended to Government that effect be given to its recommendations. The Council also recommended to Government the introduction, as soon as possible, of the scheme for the formation of the Bombay Subordinate Engineering Service.

The Council then proceeded to deal with demands for supplementary grants. Mr. Jadhav, Education Minister, moved for a demand of Rs. 21,130 for a grant-in-aid to the Bombay Boy Scouts Association. In doing so he said that the Government had decided that the Boy Scouts movement could no longer be regarded as a Government establishment. The financial assistance to the Association should, therefore, in future be regarded as grant-in-aid.

After some discussion the grant was sanctioned. Some other demands of a technical character were also passed.

Proposed Corrupt Practices Bill.

Mr. Joseph Baptista moved a resolution in order to voice the views of the Council on the Corrupt Practices Bill proposed to be introduced into the Legislative Assembly. He said that there was no one more intolerant of corruption of all kinds than himself and yet he could not see his way to support the Bill. The Muddiman Committee had, no doubt, unanimously recommended such a piece of legislation. The Muddiman Committee had muddled unanimously through many things. Their recommendation was not based on any evidence of corruption. There was no need for the legislation proposed. If it was passed it was bound to be a dead letter. Besides, it was likely to tamper with the independence of the members of the Legislatures. It was possible to bring charges against members. In the United States of America such legislation had not been found useful. On the other hand, it had led to ingenious evasions of the law.

Proceeding, Mr. Baptista said that he did not believe in the potency of the Penal Codes, nor in their purificatory character. He did not believe that laws could make men moral. He relied upon the sense of honour of members of the Legislatures.

Sir Maurice Hayward said that when he announced before the House at the commencement of the present session that the Government of India had sought opinion on the proposed Corrupt Practices Bill, and that it would be in the fitness of things if a non-official member of this House would move a resolution expressing the view of this House, he hardly realised that the question would be dealt with in the manner in which Mr. Baptista had treated it. What he (Sir Maurice) did expect was approval of the principle of the Bill after the good example of the Legislative Assembly and constructive suggestions for the improvement of the Bill in parts. He did not expect the wholesale and sweeping condemnation, that the Bill was derogatory to the dignity and independence of the members of this House.

The resolution was lost, 27 voting against it and 24 for it.

Non-Official Bills.

On the 31ST OCTOBER the second and the third reading of the Bombay Village Police Act (Amendment) Bill were gone through in a few minutes with slight amendments.

Mr. D. R. Patil moved the second reading of the Bill further to amend the Bombay Hereditary Offices Act, 1874, and presented the report of the Select Committee. The original purpose of the Bill was to do away altogether with the power of Government to punish the representative "watandar" or "watandars" for the offence or misconduct of a deputy. The Select Committee however had by a majority decided that it was necessary that Government should retain the power of directing the absolute forfeiture of the watan of the nominating "watandar" and of his co-sharers, at least as regards offences against the State.

After some discussion the consideration of the Bill was postponed.

Mr. S. K. Bole moved that a Bill further to amend the City of Bombay Municipal Act, 1888, be read a first time. The object of this Bill is to democratise the constitution of the Municipality of the City of Bombay by reserving seats on the Corporation for representatives of the backward and the depressed classes. It proposes also to correct the distribution of the elected seats to be filled by each Municipal ward by introducing representation according to population and the lowering of the franchise from a Rs. 10 rental to a Rs. 5 rental.

On the 2ND NOVEMBER during question time Sir Vasantarao Dabholkar asked if the attention of the Government had been drawn to a confidential circular sent by a non-official member of the Council to the Indian members of the Imperial, Provincial and Subordinate Forest Services requesting them to furnish him confidentially with information regarding the constitution and working of the Forest Department, and whether a copy of the circular would be placed before the Council.

Bombay Municipal Act

The discussion of the first reading of the Bill to amend the City of Bombay Municipal Act was then resumed. There was a great deal of opposition to the Bill, both from the official and the non-official benches. Put to the vote, the motion for the first reading of the Bill was lost.

The Home Member then moved that a Bill to regulate and amend the law relating to the Courts in Sind be read for the first time. The object of the Bill is the creation of a Chief Court, consisting of a Chief Judge and three or four Puisne Judges with salaries sufficient to attract and retain permanently experienced judges, both from the Bar and the Services. The Chief Court, under the Bill, will have the power of making special rules for its own procedure, not only on the Appellate but also on the Original side of its jurisdiction as a High Court.

After some discussion the Bill was read the first time and referred to a Select Committee.

The Bill further to amend the Bombay Hereditary Offices Act, 1874, was taken up and with slight amendments read a third time and passed.

Mr. Noor Mahomed moved that a Bill further to amend the Bombay Local Boards Act, 1923, be read for the first time. The object of the Bill is to have an authenticated record of marriages for the purpose of production whenever required in a court of law. The debate on the first reading was not over when the Council rose.

On the 3RD NOVEMBER after some discussion the motion for the first reading of the Bill to amend the Bombay Locals Act was put to the vote and carried. Subsequently the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

The President held that under the Standing Orders Mr. Surve's Bill further to amend the City of Bombay Municipal Act, 1888, was out of order, inasmuch as the principle underlying it was the same as that underlying Mr. Bole's Bill which the Council had rejected by a majority.

Mr. Joseph Baptista was then given leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Bombay Prevention of Gambling Act with the object of making certain verbal alterations in the Act in order to remove the ambiguity in the definition of the term "gambling."

Leave was also granted to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to the emoluments claimable by Watandar Hindu priests and a Bill further to amend the Mamlatdars Courts Act, 1906.

Sir Vasantarao Dabholkar moved: "This Council recommends to the Governor-in-Council that an extra allowance be paid to the Police Force in Bombay up to the rank of Inspector for the hard and risky work which they have to do during the present mill strike in the city and for any other labour strikes in future."

Mr. Montgomery, on behalf of the Government, said that the matter was already under the consideration of the Government.

Dr. K. E. Dadachanji moved: "This Council recommends to Government to draw up a comprehensive scheme of sanitation and medical relief, both in the municipal and rural areas, and place it before the Council so as to reduce the heavy mortality from plague, cholera, malaria and other epidemics in the Presidency."

A number of speakers laid stress on the need of a medical relief and

sanitation policy complementary to the education and excise policies of the Government.

Next day, the 4TH NOVEMBER, the Education Minister, Mr. Jadhav, said that the Government had already taken up the consideration of problems of sanitation and medical relief and were endeavouring to extend the scope of medical relief in municipal and rural areas. The mover of the resolution had slightly exaggerated the conditions in the rural areas. Those conditions were not so bad as had been pictured. The mover had asked for a committee. It was doubtful if the Council would agree to it. The resolution was then put to the vote and carried.

The excise policy of the Government of Bombay came in for criticism by Mr. R. G. Pradhan, who moved a resolution asking for a small committee consisting of some elected members of the Legislative Council, officials and financial experts, to consider and report on the financial measures that should be introduced in order to give full effect to the policy of prohibition of the traffic in alcoholic drink and drugs.

Mill Workers' Wages.

On the 5TH NOVEMBER, the last day of the Session, Mr. Surve moved : " This Council recommends to the Government to appoint a committee to enquire if the 11½ per cent. reduction in the wages effected by the mill-owners of Bombay is at all necessary."

Mr. Surve said that the millowners had resisted and fought against all attempts at an enquiry, and thus alienated every section of public opinion. The millowners were obstinate in their attitude. They had no case. If they had a case, why should they refuse to submit to an independent enquiry?

Refusing on behalf of the Government to accept the resolution, Mr. Cowasji Jivangir said that the enquiry asked for was impracticable and futile. The resolution was put to the vote and rejected by a large majority.

Betting by Youths.

Mr. Surve next moved : " This Council recommends to the Government to insert a condition in the license given to the Western India Turf Club prohibiting persons under 21 years of age from betting on the totalisator."

Mr. Montgomery, the Home Secretary, pointed out the impracticability of the suggestion made in the resolution. The resolution was put to the vote and lost.

The Council then accepted a resolution, moved by Mr. S. Nekaljay, recommending to the Governor-in-Council to recommend to the Imperial Government to consider the question of giving further opportunity to Mahars of enlisting in the army.

The Council was then prorogued.

Punjab Legislative Council

SIMLA—6TH JUNE 1925.

The Gurdwara Bill.

After a fortnight's adjournment the Punjab Legislative Council re-assembled on the 6th June in the Assembly Chamber, Simla to consider the Gurdwara Bill as amended by the Select Committee. (See Vol. I).

The agenda also included other official business. The visitors' galleries were crowded, the Sikh element being predominant. A large number of members were present. Lady Halley watched the proceedings from the Viceregal box.

Although the list contained over 100 questions these were quickly disposed of. In the majority of cases the Government's reply was: "The answer is not yet ready and will be communicated to the member when ready." In a number of cases members asked for a reply to be laid on the table. Mr. Bodh Raj asked why an answer was not ready, and was told by Sir Fazl-i-Husain that the enquiry and the collection of material took time. Mr. Ruchi Ram Sahani protested, urging that the replies should be available when asked for after due notice later. Sir John Maynard said that the delay was due to the fact that the detailed information asked for required time to collect, hence the Government's inability in the majority of cases to supply the information that day.

Sardar TARA SINGH moved the consideration of the Gurdwara Bill. He congratulated the select committee, composed of members of all communities, on the cordiality and expedition which they brought to bear on their deliberation of such an important and historic piece of legislation. The Bill was divided into four parts. They had to decide what places were Gurdwaras, what property attached to them, what compensation was to be awarded to those who at present controlled them and what form of management should be provided for the future. The Bill was a compromise measure. He was not, however, satisfied with every provision in the Bill. He wanted the Central Board to be adequately armed to discharge its duties and responsibilities together with the local committees of management. He appealed to all members of the House to support the Bill. He did not consider the notes appended by Raja Narindranath and Dr. Narang as dissenting notes, but as the suggestions of friends of the Sikh members.

Dr. Gokulchand NARANG, leader of the Swaraj Party, speaking on behalf of the Hindu members of the Council, supported the Bill. He said his note attached to the Select Committee's report was not dissenting, but only contained suggestions for the consideration of the Sikh members. He had appealed to them to be generous in their hour of victory. The Udasis were the most hit. They had partly to thank themselves for it. A large number of them were good and pious men, but the sins of a few among them had fallen on the heads of all. Nor had they organised themselves sufficiently to impress their point of view on the Government. He and the Hindu members had done their best to put forward the Udasi view, but it entirely depended upon the Sikh members to accept their suggestions or not. The Udasis were faced with a similar situation as confronted the monks and nuns during the reign of Henry VIII. King Henry told the Members of Parliament that if they did not enact the law confiscating properties monasteries, he would take the heads of some of them. The members of the Punjab Council were in a lucky position. No such threat hung over their heads (laughter). Mr. Craik, Chief Secretary had told them that the weaker must go to the wall. He (the speaker) considered no sin greater than weakness.

Mr. Craik: I said the minority must go the wall.

Dr. Gokulchand Narang: That makes no difference. It does no credit to a representative of a Government to say that a minority must go to the wall. In this case the minority interest involved is not so material but when in future the Government has to protect the interests of the minority and do it justice it will have to revise the dictum.

Continuing, Dr. Narang said that as regarded Gurdwara management, in the interest of justice and fair play, Sikhs might favourably consider the cases of those

Mahants who were suitable for their present posts. He was glad to find that Sikh members were willing to agree to take proper care of the Samadhs (graves) of Udasi Saints.

However, he was sure that the Gurdwaras would be safe in Sikh hands. (Applause.) Whether they should be in Sikh hands or in Udasi hands was a matter of domestic concern to the Hindu community. What was important was that a third party should not interfere. The Hindus and the Sikhs were brothers, and he congratulated the Sikhs on having secured a treaty with the Government represented by the Gurdwara Bill. He hoped that its terms would be honestly adhered to, and that by direct or indirect means, the provisions of the Bill would not be undone. He also hoped that, as a result of private discussions with Sikh members, some amendments would be carried. He hoped the Sikh members, on the conclusion of their religious struggle, would throw the full weight into the national movement in the country.

Sir John MAYNARD said he wished to correct a misinterpretation put upon Mr. Craik's observations by Dr. Narang, who had taken one sentence from the text. What Mr. Craik was pointing out was that in a religious matter such as the one dealt with by the Bill the view of the majority of a community must prevail, and that of the minority go under. The Government always stood for the protection of minorities. Indeed, the Gurdwara Bill itself was proof of their anxiety to protect all interests. That was why, for instance, they had provided for local committees of management to be elected by the local electorate to manage the local gurdwaras. He repudiated the suggestion that the Government would not protect the minority against encroachment on the part of the majority.

Sardar Narain SINGH referred to the history of the Sikh movement and the alleged mismanagement of the Udasins, which led to the organisation of the movement. The speaker was called to order when referring to Jaito, where he said the Sikhs had gone only for religious reasons. Continuing, he assured the members that the Sikhs did not aim at a Sikh Raj, but would co-operate with sister communities in the management of the country's affairs.

Mr. Maqbool MUHAMMAD welcomed the Bill. The solution of a most difficult question was in sight. He attached the greatest importance to the provision for universal franchise and female franchise. He hoped the Sikhs would establish, by proper use of the franchise, an irrefutable argument for its extension in the country. He congratulated the Government for having displayed constructive statesmanship in the past. Government had an unpleasant duty to perform, and they did not forget it, even in face of unpopularity. He assured the Sikhs of the hearty support of the Moslems.

Mr. Jawahar SINGH said that all was well that ended well. Sikh relations with the Government would now be more closely cemented than hitherto. He particularly thanked Sir Malcolm Halley, who had piloted the Sikh ship through the troubled waters.

The motion for taking up consideration of the report of the select committee was then put and carried without dissent.

The Amendments.

The amendments were next discussed and a large majority of them were either not moved or withdrawn after discussion.

Dr. Gokulchand withdrew one amendment after receiving an assurance from Sardar Jodh Singh and Sardar Tara Singh that the graves of Udasi saints in the Gurdwaras would be kept under repair and respected, and that Sikhs would always be ready to separate the temples and Hindu places of worship from the Gurdwaras.

Another amendment of his was accepted in an amended form. It proposed the deletion of the words "for himself" which were inserted at the instance of the Legislative Department of the Government of India. The object of this was that a petition of claim to property included in a consolidated list be made by a person, either because of his own interest or because of his interest in an institution. As the Bill stood, it conceded the right only on personal interest.

The House then proceeded with the consideration of each clause of the Bill. Although there were 90 amendments, mostly in the name of Lala Bhodraj, Sardar Bhoota Singh and Dr. Gokulchand Narang, only a few were actually moved. Two amendments of Sardar Bhoota Singh were accepted. One amendment proposed that no person should be eligible for election as a member of the Board who was an Amritdhari Sikh.

Sir Fazl-i-HUSAIN said that the adoption of the amendment would deprive a large number of Sikhs of the right of election to the Board. If the Central Board, by a majority of three-fourths of its members, passed a resolution not less than two years after the

first board came into office to the effect that no Amritdhari Sikh be eligible as a candidate for membership to the board, the special Committee of Management or Local Committees of Management, then the Government would agree to sanction that decision. He emphasised two points, firstly—that the majority to pass the resolution should be a very big majority; secondly, the calm atmosphere they all desired would, it was hoped, very soon be reached, and, it was believed, would be in full swing after two years. If such a resolution was carried by the Board, it would carry very great weight.

Sardar Bhoota SINGH then withdrew his amendment. The other amendment of Sardar Bhoota Singh was to the effect that the General Board Fund should be applied not only to the payment of expenses lawfully incurred, but that any surplus amount might be used for religious, charitable or educational purposes.

Sardar Tara Singh accepted the amendment, which was carried. Practically all the amendments were withdrawn and the last clause, Clause 147, was agreed to amidst applause.

Court Language of Commission.

Sardar Bhoota SINGH moved the addition of a new Clause 148, laying down that the court language of the Judicial Commission under the Bill be Gurmukhi (Punjabi) unless the Commission directed the use of any other language. Several Moslem members raised the objection that the amendment had not been circulated.

Sir John MAYNARD said an amendment had originally been tabled urging Punjabi as the court language of the Commission, and the present amendment only amended that drastic amendment by giving discretion to the Commission in respect of the use of any other language.

Mr. Sadiq, Mr. Shah Nawaz, Mr. Afzal Haq and Mr. Abdul Aziz strongly protested against making Punjabi the court language. The Hindu members Mr. Nanak Chand and Mr. Bodh Raj supported the motion, pointing out that the Judicial Commission would consist only of Sikhs.

Mr. AFZAL HAQ asked whether that was the first fruit of Moslem support for the Sikhs, and blamed the Government for abandoning the Moslem members, though they had always supported the Government in the past. Mr. Shah Nawaz said that the select committee had rejected a similar suggestion.

Mr. Abdul AZIZ suggested as a compromise that only English be used by the Commission, and neither Urdu nor Punjabi. The Government was in a mood to concede all that the Sikhs wanted. He wanted the Sikhs of the attitude which Moslem members might adopt in the discussion of the schedules next day.

Sir Fazl-i-HUSAIN, replying in Urdu, said the discussion had both pained and amazed him. The question raised by the amendment was of no material importance. The Government had not even considered it in the Executive Council. The Commission was not a law court, but only a special body, and the amendment left to the discretion of the Commission the use of any language. He however left it to the Sikh members to consider whether they should press that unimportant amendment, in view of the feeling expressed by some members.

Sardar Jodh SINGH said he regretted that an innocent motion should have been made the occasion of threats by the Moslem members. He was therefore, obliged to say that if anybody helped the Sikhs in respect of the Gurdwara Bill, it was the Government and not any other community.

The President at this stage adjourned the Council till next day when the amendments were further discussed and the schedule considered.

On the 7TH JULY Sardar Jodh SINGH, continuing his speech in support of the amendment suggesting the adoption of Punjabi as the Court language of the commission, assured Moslem members that the amendment was not the thin end of the wedge to raise the language issue. He repudiated the insinuation that the Hindus had instigated the Sikhs to move the amendment.

Sir Fazl-i-HUSAIN suggested a new amendment, namely, that the language of the Judicial Commission be determined by the Commission from time to time. This amendment was carried without opposition.

Schedule I was next considered and, without discussion, five Gurdwaras were omitted from it and two were added. This was done as a result of private arrangement. The remaining schedules were passed without discussion.

Sir Fazl-i-HUSAIN contradicted the rumours among Sikhs outside the Council that the Government would not agree to the adoption of the title of Shromani Gurdwara

Parbandhak Committee as the name of the Central Board, if the Board so decided. If the Committee dissolved and transferred its assets to the Central Board and gave up the control of gurdwaras to the local committees, or to the Central Board, till the local committees were constituted, the Government would have no justification in refusing to sanction the name of the Parbandhak Committee.

Sikh Prisoners.

Sardar TARA SINGH, in moving that the Bill, as amended, be passed, thanked all those who helped in framing the Bill and in supporting it. Special thanks were due to Sir Malcolm Hailey for his efforts in the solution of what at one time appeared to be a difficult problem. He also thanked Mr Craik, Chief Secretary, the Education Minister, Mr. Dalip Singh, and the members of the Sikh Council for their help. He appealed to the Government to remove all their doubts and strengthen the band of friendship which had been extended by Sir Malcolm Hailey and accepted by the Sikh community. The Government could easily create a healthy and pleasant atmosphere by releasing those who were in jail. Such an event would remove apprehensions and enable both sides to start a new era with a clean slate. (Applause.)

Sheikh Muhammad HUSAIN, in supporting the motion, said the release of the Sikh prisoners in jail, including those leaders of the present Sikh movement, before whom Sardar Tara Singh and his friends were but small fry (laughter), was essential if the Bill was to be given a fair trial.

Mr. Sewak Ram also appealed for the release of the Sikh leaders now in jail.

Sardar Gurbakh SINGH (Ambala), said there could be no joy in the hearts of the Sikhs unless the Sikh leaders were released. In order that there should be a healthy atmosphere for the successful working of the Bill the Sikh prisoners should be unconditionally released, kirpans should be free from restriction, the Jaito pilgrims should be free to conduct their religious observances and notifications declaring as unlawful such organisations as the Parbandhak Committee, Akali Dal and Akali Takt should be withdrawn. He thanked also the Sikh Sudhar committees for their help in connection with the Bill. He hoped the Sikh pant would give the Bill a fair trial.

Tribute to the Governor.

Professor Buchi Ram SAHNI said the Governor had shown both justice and statesmanship in tackling the question, and the thanks of all were due to Messrs. Buckle and Emerson for their help. He also appealed for the release of Sikh prisoners when the Bill received the assent of the Governor and the Viceroy.

Sardar Jodh SINGH, in supporting the motion, said in all their consultations with the Government the Sikhs confined themselves to the Bill and did not refer to any other matter, as had been alleged. The Sikhs knew that it was utterly useless to make other requests to the Government before a basis of agreement was found. Now, however, the fight was over, but there was the question of release of prisoners. One thing the Sikhs had learnt from the fight, and that was that the Government would not tolerate defiance of the law. Dr. Gukul Chaud had pleaded for no harsh treatment for the Udasis and others under the Bill. He assured them that it would be the duty of Sikhs to treat the Udasis in no harsh spirit. He appealed to the Government not to wait for a request from the Sikh prisoners, but to release them. Justice demanded it.

The Bill was then passed amidst loud applause.

On the motion of Sir John Maynard, the Punjab Motor Vehicles Taxation Amendment Bill was introduced, taken into consideration and passed without discussion.

Similarly, on the motion of Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, the Vaccination Law Amendment Bill was introduced and finally passed. The remainder of the business was left over for consideration in the next session in Lahore.

H. E. The Governor's Speech

9TH JULY 1925.

On the 9TH JULY Sir Malcolm HAILEY, Governor of the Punjab, addressing the members of the Punjab Legislative Council on the subject of the passage of the Gurdwara Bill made the following announcement regarding the conditions of release of certain of the Sikh prisoners who were arrested during the Gurdwara agitation :—

- "The Panjab Government will release (or will withdraw from the prosecution of) any person (other than those persons who have been convicted of or are under trial for crimes of violence or incitement to such crimes) who has been convicted by criminal courts, or is under trial in such courts on charges arising out of the recent agitation in the Sikh community, or on charges involving offences against the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, provided such release will be conditional on such persons signing an undertaking that they will obey the provisions of the law recently enacted, securing to the Sikh community the control and management of shrines and their endowments, and will not seek by means of force, or show of force, or by criminal trespass, to gain control or possession of any shrine or property attached to it or its endowments.
- "The Government will deal in a similar spirit with cases of forfeiture of land or pensions.
- "The notification of the 12th October 1923 declaring certain bodies to be unlawful associations under the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act will be withdrawn, if and when the Central Board provided by the Bill is duly constituted."

In the course of his speech His Excellency said :—

"This is not the occasion on which to stir up the smouldering ashes of past controversy or to recall events which seemed at one time to have set a large portion of the Sikh community in hostility to a Government with which it had so many ties of close friendship, honourable alike in peace and war. Those differences compelled the Punjab Government, reluctantly but inevitably, to use its powers for the maintenance of order and for the defence of rights conferred by the existing law. They led large numbers of Sikhs into open opposition to that law, and to action which subjected them to conviction by our criminal courts. With every desire to foster the new atmosphere in which we can hope now to envisage the future of this question, I could not conscientiously extend to all of that number the excuse that they were actuated purely by a desire to right a religious disability, or to secure the better management of their religious institutions. Nevertheless, it is true that large numbers were impelled to these courses, mistaken and dangerous as we ourselves held them to be, by a sense of offence to their religion. We deplored that belief. We denied that there was anything in our law or the administration of justice which interfered with the freedom of religious worship, and we claimed that if there was anything which militated against the religious developments which Sikhs sought to secure, or against the attainment of a better management for their religious institutions, a remedy could be found in legislation. We believed that a statute could be framed which, while it would not unduly prejudice the rights of others, would meet any legitimate claim which reasonable and religious minded men of the community could advance. If in the long and troubled chronicle of those events much has to be recorded which has resulted in resentment of the action of Government and much that we have had to deplore in the attitude of some members of the community yet history will at least render us this tribute that we never ceased our efforts to secure, and even to promote, legislation of this nature, for there was at the back of all this trouble a difficulty of real substance, which only a change of law could remedy. The attention of the outside world has been concentrated so much on the externals of the conduct that the actual problem which troubled those who were interested purely on the religious side has perhaps been obscured.

Revival of Sikhism.

"There has, in the latter half of this generation, been a keen revival of Sikhism of the stricter type, taught by the Tenth Guru. I need not analyse the course of this revival, or its course, but the inevitable tendency of a movement of this nature, with its insistence on a more rigid ritual, not only to quicken religious interest but to emphasise the consciousness of difference between the Sikhs and the Hindu community, from which they sprang. Furthermore, it brought into conflict the Amritdhari Sikhs, who now constitute the great majority of the population, with the minorities which still claim to be within worship which characterised the followers of the earlier Gurus. But the Amritdhari Sikh, with all his growing strength and with a central organisation ministering to his advance, found that many of the most revered and the best endowed shrines of Sikhism were in the hands of men who did not necessarily follow the Amritdhari form. They have indeed lately, as a body, publicly denied that they are now or ever had been Sikhs. True Sikhism was in the past under great obligations to the Udisias. They had been instrumental in building up the shrines and securing for them grants of land and money. In earlier days it was they who constituted the religious element in a militant

community, but the position occupied to-day by the managers of these shrines, secured as it was by a hereditary tenure, was not an easy one for the preponderant majority of Sikhs to face, and it was clearly not one which our civil courts, with their regard for established possession and settled usage could attempt to rectify.

Powers of the Courts.

"On another point of difficulty our courts could not operate. Many of the managers were men whose lives and whose services to the institutions were not open to reproach, but there were others of whom that was certainly not the case, and in this life the irritation bred by one open scandal will destroy obligations established by years of good work. With the scandals our courts could deal, but here again the procedure was far from rapid, and the result not always certain. It is not perhaps surprising that a demand should have arisen for the recognition of a purely communal management of Sikh institutions, and for liberty to deal both with endowments and their managers, unhampered by rights based on the usage of the past. Demands of this nature have constituted a common feature of religious development elsewhere in the world, and in one form or another efforts have generally been made to meet them. Our attitude was never one of opposition to the principle itself. If we differed, it was in our contention that the change could not and should not be effected by direct action, or by show of force. It could only be secured with the assent of the other communities which would be affected by the contemplated change of system, and could not be effective unless it were ratified by legislation.

The Gurdwara Bill

"Here, then, was the real problem. There were times when other issues seemed to obscure it, and we ourselves felt strongly that the religious difficulty was being pressed by sections to all appearance for other objects, and certainly in a manner which could not conduce either to the advantage of the community itself or the ordered progress of the Punjab. Nevertheless, it remained for settlement, and if other issues existed, they could not be judged on their merits, nor handled in an even temper on either side until the religious problem had been isolated. It is that problem which the Bill you have just considered is intended to solve. How far it meets the primary requirements of such a measure, the safeguarding of interests of other communities which claim their share in the use of shrines, the protection of minorities within the community itself, the compensation of persons whose connection with the management is terminated, are questions which time must answer. It has already this in its favour. It is a Bill promoted by Sikhs themselves, and accepted in this House by other communities with a cordiality which has obviated the necessity of a single dividing vote. It is freighted with the hopes of Sikhs for their future tranquility and the religious security of their community. It is launched amid the fair auspices of good-will from others, but its success depends on the spirit and temper in which Sikhs themselves approach the administration of its provisions. Hindus have long worshipped at many of the shrines with which it deals. Some of those contain relics of Hindus who have ministered to their service in the past. Let a wide spirit of tolerance regulate the dealings of Sikhs with them. The Udasis have in the past deserved well of the Sikhs. Let a discriminating liberality characterize relations with those members of the sect, against whom no charge of mismanagement can be laid. (Hear, hear). The minorities among the Sikhs cherish their position in the community. They share its traditions and have contributed to its achievements. Let the majority remember that rigidity in doctrine and exclusiveness in practice foster schism and disintegrate religions. (Hear hear.)

Kali Prisoners' Problem.

"I have given my word of advice to the Sikhs, and you will reasonably ask: What share is the Government prepared to take in endeavouring to secure the smooth and successful working of this measure? It has shown its goodwill in the preparation of the Bill. It has given its support to the Council. Is it ready to go no further? Appeals have been made to us to remove the sting and to obliterate the memory of the differences of the last few years by a general amnesty to all prisoners, and by the withdrawal of all pending prosecutions. It is admitted that we have throughout maintained the attitude that this measure must be considered on its merits as the legislative solution of a religious problem. We gave our support to the measure under no conditions, express or implied, but it can be pleaded against us, and on our own admission, that many of those now imprisoned have offended against the law with no felonious intent. At the best they are sufferers in the cause of religion. At the worst they have yielded inadvisedly to the misdirection of others. It is urged again that so long as large numbers of the community

are still held in prison misunderstanding and rancour will persist, and the efforts of those who have been working for this settlement will be frustrated. Their task has not been easy, for they have met with much opposition from certain extreme sections. Unless we now assist them the very operation of the Bill itself may be imperilled. The appeal is powerful. It is one which would carry force even were the Government itself not anxious to work for that better understanding which we hoped that the Bill would help to foster. We have considered that appeal anxiously, and with every sympathy. Nor did it seem right to miss the earliest occasion of acquainting the Punjab legislature with our decision. I must remind you that the Bill still has to obtain the assent of the Governor-General, and that certain of its clauses require validation by the Indian Legislature.

The Government's Contribution.

"The Punjab Government is, however, prepared at once to take such steps as it feels to be possible, without risk to the maintenance of order or to a recurrence of those troubles which it is our object to compose. We cannot agree to a general or unconditional amnesty, but we are prepared to liberate all those who will undertake to follow the procedure laid down by the Bill for the settlement of difficulties which may arise in connection with the possession of shrines and their future management—(hear, hear)—and to refrain from resort to other courses. We feel that those who cannot accept or give effect to a solution proposed by their own representatives in this Council, and supported there unanimously by all the representatives of other interests concerned, are not fit subjects for the clemency of the Crown, nor would their liberation conduce to the atmosphere of peace and mutual toleration which can alone make this measure successful in operation. But it is best that I should read to you the precise terms of our decision. It is as follows:—

Here follows the announcement given on page 287.

Release of Jaito Jathas.

"That is the contribution which the Punjab Government brings to the furtherance of those aims which actuated this Council when it passed the Gurdwara Bill. But there is another outstanding problem, one intimately connected with the trouble which has agitated the Sikhs in the Punjab, though its scene does not lie within our own borders. I mean that arising from the despatch of jathas to Jaito. I am permitted to say that the Government of India, on their part, have not been less anxious than the local Government to recognise the determination now evinced by the Sikh community to seek a constitutional solution of their religious difficulties. They desire to mark this occasion by a measure which, while maintaining the authority which every Indian State must claim for itself, and which it is our duty to assert for a State under our charge, will nevertheless allow full freedom of access to those who desire to use the shrine at Jaito for legitimate purposes of worship. (Hear, hear.) By the favour of His Excellency the Viceroy, I am allowed to read the following announcement which will appear in the next "Gazette."

"The Administrator of Nabha will release Sikhs now detained in Nabha, or imprisoned there after conviction by criminal courts (other than persons who have been convicted of or are under trial for crimes of violence or incitement to such crimes), in connection with charges arising out of the recent agitation regarding the Gangsar Gurdwara."

"The Administrator of Nabha will permit bands of pilgrims to proceed for religious worship to the Gangsar Gurdwara under the following rules:

- (a) That they abstain from holding political diwans or spreading political propaganda during their sojourn within the State boundaries.
- (b) That they confine themselves to the use of the gurdwara itself, and such reasonable space around it as may be set apart for their accommodation.
- (c) That they will be self-supporting during their visit, the village and mandi of Jaito being excluded from the area set apart for their accommodation.
- (d) That any such band will arrive at Jaito by rail or by a road decided upon by the Administrator, and that suitable arrangements shall have been made to ensure that any such band of pilgrims will be unaccompanied by any sangat or following.
- (e) That the date of the arrival of any such band at Jaito is communicated to the Administrator in order to enable him to make suitable arrangements in connection with the same."

Need for Cooperation.

"These then are the decisions of the Government, framed with the single and sincere desire to contribute to the successful working of this measure, and in the sincere hope

that this may be followed by the return of the Sikh community to the paths of settled order, and to its old relations of trust and confidence in the Government. And now it is for those who guide the opinions of the community, whether inside or outside this Council, to make their choice and to shape their course. If they have ever felt the cause of their religion was at any time in peril, they must now realise that, with the assistance of this legislature, they have secured a measure which enables them to look with assurance on the future. For the rest, I counsel them to think with earnestness and with foresight on the future of their community. It cannot stand alone. Its welfare and its progress are bound up with the development of the great province of which it forms a part. For that development we need harmony and tranquillity, mutual trust, not only between the community and the Government, but between every section and class of the people. On that foundation alone we can rear the great edifice of the future. If they truly desire to establish the position of their own people, let them strive for that concord, realising that in the well-being of the whole lies their own prosperity and their own success. Their people have inherited great traditions from the past, they have great qualities no less valuable in the conditions of to-day. Let them contribute these not to any jealous or partisan ambition for their community alone, but to the tranquil, the ordered and the united progress of the whole of the Punjab".

The December Session

LAHORE—3RD DECEMBER 1925.

The December Session of the Punjab Legislative Council was held at Lahore on the 3rd December. After the election of Chandhuri Sahabuddin as the President of the Council the House proceeded to transact official business.

The Punjab Tenancy Amendment Bill was introduced and referred to a Select Committee, and eight Government demands for supplementary grants were voted without discussion.

A lively debate followed over the next demand, in respect of Miscellaneous (reserved), asking the Council to vote supplementary grants of Rs. 26,150 to meet the estimated expenditure during the current year over the Police Enquiry Committee, and Rs. 20,850 to meet the expenditure over the Jail Enquiry Committee.

A number of non-official members opposed the motion, criticised the scope of the terms of reference of the two Committees and put in a strong plea for more non-official members on both Committees. The administration of the jails came in for a good deal of severe criticism from members, who asked that the scope of the terms of reference of the Jail Enquiry Committee be widened, and include among its members such men as Lala Lajpat Rai, who had experience of jail life, and who could elicit valuable information from witnesses.

Mr. Dunnott, Home-Secretary, replying on behalf of the Government, pointed out that Government had not fixed any period for the Jail Enquiry Committee, and if the volume of evidence was considerable and the Committee could not finish its work within the time limit, the Government would certainly extend the period.

On the 4TH DECEMBER the Council discussed a non-official resolution which recommended to the Government that non-official members of the Council be made non-official visitors of jails within their respective constituencies, and after a lively debate the resolution was carried without a division.

Female Franchise.

Lala Bodh Raj then moved a resolution recommending the Government so to amend the Punjab Legislative Council electoral rules as to remove sex disqualification in the matter of registration on the electoral roll of persons who are entitled to vote in elections held for the Punjab Council. He strongly advocated the cause of female franchise, saying that the time had come when no restrictions should be put on women's rights simply on account of their sex, or on account of some false and ancient conservative custom prevailing in India.

On the 7TH DECEMBER Mr. Budhraj's resolution on the female franchise was continued, and after three hours debate in which several non-official and official members took part, the resolution was adopted without a division amidst applause.

Mandi Hydro-Electric Scheme.

Professor Buchsram next moved a resolution recommending the appointment of a Committee to enquire into and report on the relative merits of the Mandi hydro-electric

and Madhopur schemes, and requesting that no further expenditure be incurred on the Mandi scheme till the report of the proposed Committee had been examined by the Government. The resolution was opposed by Mr. Sangher, Chief Irrigation Engineer, Punjab, and was under discussion when the Council adjourned.

Next day, the **8TH DECEMBER**, after three hours' debate the Council rejected Professor Ruchi Ram's resolution on the Mandi Hydro-Electric scheme and the Madhopur scheme.

Rai Sahib Chottu Ram, Minister for Agriculture, opposed the motion, and said the Madhopur scheme was technically unsound. The appointment of another committee would only delay the Mandi scheme and waste a good deal of the money the Government had already spent.

Another resolution moved by Chaudhuri Dulichand, recommending preferential treatment to statutory agriculturists and the stoppage of further recruitment of non-agriculturists till the deficiency of samindars in the various Government services was made good, was talked out after an hour's discussion.

Supplementary Demands

On the **11TH DECEMBER** Sardar Jodh Singh's amendment for a reduction of Rs. 1 from the supplementary grant demanded by the Government to meet the expenses of elections under the new Gurdwaras Act was resumed, when a number of non-official members once more took the opportunity of appealing to the Government to release the Sikh prisoners.

Sir John Maynard, replying on behalf of the Government, informed the House that the time for the measure asked for had not yet arrived, and he did not want to add to the mischief which was being done by too much talk on the subject.

The amendment, however, being put to the vote, was carried without a division.

The original demand with a reduction of Rs. 1 was then passed without discussion, and the rest of the supplementary demands of the Government were then voted in quick succession.

Punjab Money Lender's Bill

On the **12TH DECEMBER** Mr. Maqbool Mahmud introduced the Punjab Money Lender's Bill amid some opposition, and moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Sir John Maynard, explaining the attitude of the Government, said that the money-lender was essential for the rural people and their requirements, and about Rs. 10 crores were required annually by agriculturists in the Punjab from money-lenders to carry on their business. The aim of the present Bill was to deal with one particular evil, namely, the bad and vicious system of account-keeping by money-lenders, and, in the event of the Bill issuing from the Select Committee in a form which the Government did not approve, it might take any attitude it thought fit, but for the present he supported the Bill on behalf of the Government for reference to a Select Committee.

On the **14TH DECEMBER** the Council devoted fully four hours to the discussion of the motion of Mir Maqbool Mahmud for referring the Punjab Money-lenders Bill to a Select Committee, which evoked strong opposition when the Bill was introduced.

After a lively and heated discussion the motion was carried by 44 votes to 10.

Raja Narendranath moved an amendment to the effect that the names of Mr. Gray, Rai Bahadur Dhanpat Rai, and Sardar Narain Singh be added to the Select Committee. He said that the measure savoured of a class and communal measure, and, in requesting the Council to add the names of those three members, he wanted to balance the number of supporters and opponents in the Select Committee.

Sir John Maynard opposed the amendment and said that the Select Committee should not consist of such a large number of men.

Dr. Gokalchand Narang challenged the statement of the Government that the measure was a purely economic one and pointed out that it was special pleading for a special class. He was surprised to see the Government supporting the measure and hoped there would be a limit to such unholy alliances.

The amendment was lost and the Bill was referred to the Select Committee consisting of the members proposed by the mover.

The Punjab Aerial Ropeways Bill was introduced and referred to a Select Committee, and the Punjab Tenancy Act (Amendment) Bill, as reported off by the Select Committee, was taken into consideration and passed.

The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

U. P. Legislative Council

LUCKNOW—19TH AUGUST 1925.

The first meeting of the United Provinces Legislative Council was held on the 19TH AUGUST, Rai Bahadur Lala Sita Ram was elected President by a majority of votes.

References were made to the death of Mr. C. R. Das, Sir Surendranath Banerjee and others.

Municipalities Act.

On the 20TH AUGUST Pandit Hargovind PANT moved that the Bill to amend the United Provinces Municipalities Act of 1916 be taken into consideration. He said the Bill sought to extend the municipal franchise and aimed at removing the ban against political offenders who had been imprisoned for more than six months. Raja Jagannath Bux Singh's motion that the Bill should be circulated for the purpose of eliciting public opinion was carried by 38 votes to 30.

The Bill to amend the District Boards Act of 1922 was referred to a select committee consisting of 23 members.

Pandit Yajna Narain UPADHYA moved a resolution recommending the appointment of a committee to suggest means of alleviating unemployment among the educated classes in the Provinces. The motion was adopted with an amendment by Khan Bahadur Fasihuddin who suggested that the Directors of Agriculture, Industries and Education should be members of the committee.

On the 21ST AUGUST, the debate on the resolution regarding the amendment of the Municipal Act of 1916 was resumed. After considerable discussion, in the course of which several members stated that the Act contained many defects and needed overhauling, while others declared that it was impossible to postpone the elections on such grounds, Mr. Merhotra's amendment to the effect that the elections should not be postponed was accepted. The resolution, as amended, was then discussed and defeated.

High School and Intermediate Education.

Dr. Ziauddin AHMAD moved that the Governor, acting with his Ministers, should appoint a committee to consider the scheme of high school and intermediate education, and the desirability of reducing the secondary education course to eleven years, followed by a three years course for the ordinary B. A. course.

In the course of the discussion, Dr. Ganeshprasad and Dr. Saafat Ahmad supported the motion. They considered that the Board of High School and Intermediate Education Act had done more harm than good to education in the Province. Dr. Ziauddin said the recommendations of the Sadler Commission were not suited to the Province. Dr. Ganeshprasad said he feared that the operation of the Board of Intermediate Education Act had tended to lower the standard of examinations in the Province. Dr. Saafat Ahmad Khan said that boys were made to waste two years of their life in studying for intermediate examinations..

Jail Administration.

On the 22ND AUGUST, Babu NEMISARAN moved a resolution recommending to the Government to appoint a committee to revise the Jail Manual so as to make jail administration more humane and more in accordance with modern ideas. Further, that all practices in jails which savoured of racial distinction should at once be stopped; that expenditure per head of the jail population should be uniform, irrespective of the class, or race of any individual prisoner, and that a standing committee of the Council be appointed to advise the Government in the Jail Department.

The mover made a number of allegations of ill-treatment in the jails although he admitted that many improvements had been made.

The Maharaja of MAHMUDABAD, Home Member, said he had been trying his best to remove all just and reasonable grievances. That prison diet was more or less wholesome was evident from the fact that prisoners mostly gained in weight. In conformity with

the rules of the Jail Manual the Government were doing their best to eradicate all racial distinctions. After further discussion the resolution was carried without a division.

Punitive Police Tax.

Chaudhry Badan SINGH moved a resolution recommending to the Government to absolve the residents of places where punitive police were stationed from liability for the payment of punitive police tax from the 1st August, 1925.

The Home Member, in opposing the resolution, pointed out that the demand put forward in the resolution was in itself against the express provision of the law. The tax had a different effect on would be rioters, and before Chehelum and Dasehra had passed off it was impossible for the Government to withdraw the punitive police from the areas where communal relations were strained. The resolution was carried by 29 votes to 25.

Political Prisoners.

Babu Damodar DAS recommended to the Government to exempt all those persons who were dismissed from Government service or sentenced to imprisonment in connection with the non-cooperation movement or on political grounds, from the disqualifications debarring them from seeking election to local bodies.

Mr. Hafiz Hidayet Hussain moved an amendment inserting the phrase "not involving moral turpitude" after the words "dismissed from Government service." The amendment was accepted by the House but the resolution as amended was defeated.

Raja Jagannath BUX SINGH moved a resolution recommending that the Council Chamber, including the wings, should be completed at as early a date as possible. It surprised him to learn that the present intentions of the Government were to build a Council Chamber without the wings. As originally planned all the Ministerial offices attached to the Secretariat were to be accommodated in the wings of the Chamber, and if the building of the wings were postponed there would be considerable difficulty in accommodation. The resolution was carried.

Encouraging Jail Industries.

On the 24TH AUGUST a demand for Rs. 64,377 (gross Rs. 70,367) under the head "General Administration" resulted in some discussion. Amendments were moved urging a reduction in the amount of purchase of tents for district officers on grounds of financial stringency, but Sir Samuel O'Donnell explained that considerable reduction had already been made. Nearly a lakh and a half was badly needed to renew tents but in view of the present financial conditions Government were going to provide at present only Rs. 50,000 on this account. The amendments were negatived.

The Council adjourned *sine die*.

The December Session

LUCKNOW—14TH DECEMBER 1925

After an interval of about four months the United Provinces Legislative Council met on the 14TH DECEMBER with Rai Bahadur Lala Sitaram in the Chair. The business of the House was confined to a condolence resolution on the death of the Queen-Mother, swearing in of Members, and presentation of the report from the Committee of Public Accounts.

Compulsory Primary Education Bill.

On the 15TH DECEMBER, in introducing the Bill on rural education, the MINISTER of Education said that the first thing that attracted his attention on assuming the duties of Minister was the need for extension of primary education in the rural areas. In spite of the best intention of the Government and public spirited men nothing substantial could be done for the welfare of the villagers owing to their lack of education. Their ignorance stood in the way of the eradication of social evils from their midst. Villagers could not understand the elementary principles of hygiene, of modern methods of agriculture, and of co-operation for the common good, in short, they could not discriminate between what was good and what was bad for them. The sole remedy was the spread of education amongst them. Owing to various reasons, nothing short of compulsion would do so far as the ignorant villagers were concerned. If it were left to their will to send their children to school, several ages would elapse before the average villager could be

deemed sufficiently educated to understand what was conducive to his welfare. He would remain in ignorance to be driven and directed by his fellowmen from the cities.

The element of compulsion in the Bill need frighten no one. Compulsion would be enforced in small selected areas at the outset, and, if it succeeded, its scope would be widened. The Government had brought the Bill before the Council after careful and anxious consideration. The state of primary education in the Province was carefully investigated by Mr. K. P. Kichlu, who was deputed for that purpose. Mr. Kichlu submitted a report and the Bill was based on that excellent report. Further, Kunwar Jagadish Prasad, Education Secretary, and Mr. Mackenzie, Director of Public Instruction, had carefully considered the Bill in all its aspects and in all its clauses. It would go to a Select Committee which would suggest additions and alterations to improve the Bill. The Bill was being discussed when the Council adjourned.

On the 16TH DECEMBER, the debate on the Ministerial motion that the Compulsory Primary Education Bill be referred to a Select Committee, was resumed.

Lala Mathura Prasad MERHOTRA said the curriculum of the primary schools should be so drawn up as to render compulsory education most beneficial to the sons of agriculturists. The children of the soil must be taught how to improve their methods of agriculture and their cottage industries. They must be made to understand the principles of co-operative credit. The Government should not ignore the question of funds. If the District Boards were left alone to finance their own primary schools, they would never take the initiative and apply for the introduction of compulsory education within their jurisdiction. The Government should shoulder the greater portion of the financial burden and render all possible assistance of the District Boards.

Mr. Kunwar Jagadish PRASAD, Education Secretary, said the Government were perfectly alive to the fact that unless the education sought to be spread in the villages was in conformity with the need of the rural population, the Bill, when enacted would be worse than useless. The Government would carefully consider the question of specially trained teachers for employment in rural primary schools. There was no occasion for the Government to insert a taxation clause in the Bill. Under the District Boards Act of 1922 local bodies had been given sufficient powers of taxation and their sources of supply were not yet exhausted.

Rai Rajeswar BALI, Minister of Education, expressed his gratitude for the reception that had been accorded to the Bill from every section of the House. The schools which would come into existence under the Act would be primary schools for boys of ages varying from 6 to 11 years, who could not be expected to understand much of religion or morals. The best thing would be to get the type of teachers that would be able to influence the boys by setting good examples. The Bill was only in its elementary stage now and before its final adoption the Government would certainly take advantage of the valuable suggestions from the different members.

The Minister's speech brought the debate to a close and the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

Government Service and Caste Distinction.

On the 17TH DECEMBER Pandit Brijnandan Prasad MISRA moved: "The Council recommends to the Government to remove all prohibitions of caste with respect to the admission of people to the public services if they are otherwise qualified, and to cancel all orders, regulations or instructions containing such prohibitions, and to order the consequent correction of the departmental manuals and other papers accordingly." At the outset the mover made it clear that he did not intend that any sort of racial bias should enter into the discussion. The motion was restricted to the question of castes belonging to different races and it had nothing to do with any religion. In the Police Department certain castes were debarred from entering some branches of the forces. As an instance of his remark he quoted a paragraph from the Police Manual in which it was put down that Brahmins should seldom be nominated for entry into the mounted police force. In another paragraph of the Police Manual it was stated that enlistments to the armed and civil Police forces from certain low castes should, as far as possible, be avoided and that Kayasthas and Banias should seldom be enrolled. The speaker asked to be informed on what basis and with what motive the Government make those restrictions.

In seconding the resolution, Mr. MUKANDILAL moved the following amendment:—For the words "Remove all prohibitions of caste with respect to the admission of people to the public services if they are otherwise qualified, and to cancel all orders, regulations or instructions containing such prohibitions and to order the consequent correction of departmental manuals and other papers accordingly", substitute the words "issue instruc-

tions to all departmental heads, offices, selection boards and selection committees that they should admit into and select for Government service all persons (otherwise qualified), irrespective of caste, creed, religion and race, and that the Government be pleased to cancel and expunge from the departmental manuals or codes all prohibitions, restrictions, disqualifications, regulations and orders which bar any individual from entering into, competing, or offering himself for any department of Government service. Mr. Mukandilal said that the original resolution and his amendment were both based on the Queen's Proclamation of 1858.

The Maharaja of MAHMUDABAD, Home Member, regretted that he could not accept the resolution on behalf of the Government. The principle underlying the resolution was undoubtedly excellent, but unfortunately there were administrative difficulties in the way. If a chamar were to be enrolled in the police force and be appointed sub-inspector of police, he would not only not be able to discharge his duties properly, but his own life would be made miserable because of caste prejudices. If he were to go to a village, he would not be permitted to enter the house of any high caste man, Hindu or Musalman. Not many men would give him a glass of water to drink if he were thirsty. He would not even be permitted to draw his own water from the village wells. There were certainly restrictions in the Police Manual in regard to the enlistment of the members of criminal tribes and wandering gangs, but those restrictions had to be made, as the Government did not think that habitual lawbreakers were suitable candidates for enlistment to the police force.

After a prolonged discussion Mr. Mukandilal's amendment was put to the vote and rejected, while the original resolution was carried without division.

Adult Education.

Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayet HUSAIN moved: "This Council recommends to the Government to take steps for the promotion of adult education in the municipal and rural areas of these Provinces at an early date." The mover said the subject had now begun to attract considerable public attention, but he doubted if its scope or significance was fully realised. According to the census report the proportion of literacy per thousand was 24 in 1911, and 37 in 1921. The progress made was insignificant and inadequate. More sustained efforts were needed both by the Government and by the public. There should be a network of night schools, and a portion of the educational grants to the District Boards should be earmarked for this purpose. The mover referred to the Governor's Durbar speech and appealed to every one to aid the Government in educating the Council's "masters"—the voters.

Mr. A. H. MACKENZIE Director of Public Instruction, said that the Education Department had no intention to oppose such a resolution. On the contrary they welcomed it. The Department had already taken the initiative in that direction. As early as 1921 they addressed a certain number of municipal boards in regard to this matter. The Government had first to make some experiments and watch if there was a demand for adult schools. The experiments were confined to six municipal boards only. In those six boards there were at present 80 schools with a total roll of about 2,200 students. Government readily defrayed the entire cost. The experiments had proved sufficiently successful and the Education Department hoped similar schools would be started by more municipalities. But the Government's financial responsibility must have a limit and in future municipal boards would be asked to bear their reasonable share of the cost. The speaker was afraid that the municipal boards would not be much inclined to finance even such an excellent scheme. In the interior of certain districts similar attempts had been made, but only with indifferent success. Failure was due not merely to lack of finance, but because of the difficulty of finding a sufficient number of adult students at one centre and because of the lack of suitable teacher for such institutions.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

Motion for Adjournment.

On the 18TH DECEMBER Babu NEMISARAN wanted to know what action the Government had taken against Mr. T.J.C. Acton, District Magistrate of Bulandshahr, for alleged discourtesy to Pandit Nanakchand, M.L.C. when the latter wanted an interview with him.

The Finance Member replied that the Government had received no complaint from Pandit Nanakchand and therefore did not propose to take any action.

The Finance Member's reply gave rise to a series of supplementary questions and ultimately two members, Pandit Brijnandan Prasad Misra and Babu Vikramjit Singh, gave notice to the President of their intention to move the adjournment of the House in order to

discuss the action of the Government on the conduct of Mr. Acton, the District Magistrate of Bulandshahr.

Rai Bahadur Lala Sita Ram, President of the Council, expressed the view that the adjournment motion was in order and ruled that unless it was disallowed by the Governor, the motion would be taken up that day.

The Council then discussed non-official resolutions.

Pandit Hargovind PANT moved : "This Council recommends to the Government to remove Kumaon from the Scheduled Districts Act and to appoint a committee to revise and to consolidate the local rules with a view to presenting a Bill which serves this purpose for the consideration of the Council." The mover said Kumaon was much in advance of the rest of the United Provinces in the matter of education, and it was a pity that such a division should be classified in the same category as the wild tracts inhabited by half-civilised people like Bhils and Gonds.

Babu Bhagwati Sahai Bedar moved an amendment recommending the appointment of a committee to suggest necessary measures for getting Kumaon removed from the scope of the Scheduled Districts Act. The resolution as amended, was adopted by the Council.

Mr. Aslam SAFI moved for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the United Provinces Municipalities Act of 1925, as amended by Act 2 of 1919. Leave was granted by the Council.

Pandit Nanak Chand was granted leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Allahabad University Act of 1921.

The Council then discussed the following resolution : "This Council recommends to the Government that instructions be issued to the Record Officers that in districts where record operations are going on they should not disturb the existing rights wherever they are corroborated by the last (current) settlement entries.

The Finance Member and the Member of the Board of Revenue opposed the resolution which, after a dull discussion, was adopted by the Council.

Adjournment Motion Carried.

The motion for the adjournment of the House, subsequently came up for discussion.

Pandit Brijnandan Prasad MISRA moved : "This House be now adjourned." He narrated at length the incidents that led to the questions put to the Council. Pandit Nanakchand, M. L. C., wanted an interview with Mr. T. J. C. Acton, Collector of Bulandshahr. Mr. Acton refused it and some curt letters were exchanged between the Pandit and the Magistrate. The Pandit took exception to certain remarks of the Magistrate. Babu Vikramjit Singh, in seconding the motion, said that an insult to a member of the Council was an insult to the Council. The Magistrate's letter was discourteous to a degree.

Mr. BURN dealt point by point with the matter. Firstly, there was a grievance because an official had been discourteous to a member of the Council. The Government always disapproved of discourteous behaviour on the part of any of its officials to any visitor, but such instances were admittedly rare. Secondly, the House had made its grievance that the Government took no action. As a matter of fact, the Government took action one month before notice of the question had been received. The Chief Secretary had already addressed a letter to the Commissioner of Meerut Division to convey to Mr. Acton the Governor's disapproval of his action. If the replies to the questions and supplementary questions put to-day were not to the satisfaction of the members, he (the speaker) craved the indulgence of the House. It was unfortunate that Sir Samuel O'Donnell, who was to reply to the questions, had been, by reasons of his health, kept away from the House. The speaker had had no time to prepare himself for the questions.

After the Finance Member's speech, several members requested the mover to withdraw the censure motion. After some discussion, the adjournment motion was put to the House and carried by 31 votes against 20.

Development of Rural Area.

On the 19TH DECEMBER Pandit Govind Ballabh PANT, the leader of the Swaraj party moved the following resolution :—

"That this Council recommends to the Government to allot the sum of Rs. 56 lakhs remitted this year by the Government of India out of the Provincial contribution, fixed by the Meston Committee, for rural development, such as the promotion of agriculture, cottage industries, primary and vocational education, improvement of sanitation, water-supply, communications, and housing in villages, etc., to form a development fund, to which the above and all other sums that may hereafter be so remitted be transferred; and

to constitute a Development Board, consisting chiefly of members elected by this Council, with a Secretary or a commissioner appointed by the Board from among the public men, to carry out such development?

In moving the resolution, Pandit Govind Ballabh referred to the condition of the rural population in the United Provinces. Education was in a very backward state in the rural area. Their economic position was worse still. The industrial scope of the people was narrow, and their resources very restricted. Pressure on land was on the increase from day to day, and the transfer of holdings was going on continuously. The different cottage industries that were a source of income to agriculturists had been throttled by Manchester, Tokio, Liverpool, and New York. The Government must tackle more earnestly, more vigorously, the problem of rural re-organisation.

Rai Bahadur Babu Vikramjit SINGH moved an amendment to the effect that for the words "transferred and to constitute a Development Board, consisting chiefly of members elected by this Council, with a Secretary or a Commissioner appointed by the Board from among the public men to carry out such development" be substituted by the words "placed at the disposal of the Hon. Ministers to spend in accordance with the advice of a Development Board, to be constituted of official and non-official members of the Legislative Council, on which there should be a non-official majority, to carry out the above scheme."

The amendment was supported by Thakur Hanuman Singh, Nawab Mahomed Yusuf, Thakur Mashal Singh, Dr. Safa-at Ahmed Khan, and Mr. Mukandilal, and accepted by the mover of the resolution.

The Nawab of CHATTARI, Minister of Industries, assured the Council that the Ministers and the Government were trying their level best to develop the rural area in every respect. The Government was aware that there was much that yet remained to be done. He greatly appreciated the anxiety of members to devote more money for the Nation-building Departments, but he feared that the establishment of a Development Board was unsound on principle. There was not much sense in adding a fifth wheel to the carriage of State.

After several other speeches Babu Vikramjit Singh's amendment was put before the Council and adopted. The resolution, as amended, was then carried by the Council.

Government's Excise Policy.

On the 21ST DECEMBER, Pandit Govind Ballabh PANT moved. "This Council recommends to the Government that they should declare unequivocally by embodying in the Excise Manual, that the aim and object of the excise policy of Government is total abstinence, which should be promoted by all legitimate means." The mover pointed out that on the 31st March, 1925, a resolution was adopted by the Council asking the Government to accept total abstinence as the aim and object of their excise policy. A similar recommendation was made by the excise conference held early this year.

Mr. BLUNT, Financial and Excise Secretary to the Government, pointed out that the present excise policy of the Government, as stated in paragraph two of the Excise Manual, might be epitomised in the phrase: "the promotion of temperance by all legitimate means". Was there a great difference between this statement and the aim enunciated by the mover in his resolution? During the past few years the force of public opinion among the consuming classes, on the one hand and the restrictions imposed by the Government in pursuance of their policy, on the other hand, caused a striking decrease in consumption. Government doubted whether the absence of any reference to excise revenue in their statement of excise policy would materially improve matters. Further, the Excise Manual was now being revised and would shortly be published in a new form.

After some further discussion the resolution was put to the House which divided before the proposal was negatived by 39 votes to 16.

Revenue Commissionerships.

On the 22ND DECEMBER Chaudhury Badan SINGH moved: "This Council recommends to the Government that they should move the Government of India to take necessary steps for the abolition of the Revenue Commissionership in these Provinces."

Rai Sahib Lala Jagdish PRASAD moved an amendment urging upon the Government to make proposals in pursuance of the recommendations of the Commissioners' Committee appointed in 1922 to the Government of India for reduction in the number of Revenue Commissioners.

The amendment was accepted by the House.

The **FINANCE MEMBER** regretted that the Government could take no action in regard to the reduction in the number of Commissioners until the effect of the new tenancy legislation on the Commissioners' appeals was seen.

The resolution, as amended, was carried by the Council.

Representation of Depressed Classes.

On the **23RD DECEMBER**, the last day of the December Session, **Babu KHEM-CHAND** moved : " This Council recommends to the Government to arrange that at least one member from among the depressed classes shall be nominated to each municipality and notified area in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh with the exception of the municipalities of Agra and Cawnpore, to which two members should be nominated."

In moving the resolution **Babu Khemchand** pointed out that the depressed classes were represented in all the district boards in the United Provinces. It was only just that those men should have some sort of representation in the administration of municipal areas, where a large number of them resided.

Rai Rajeswar BALI, Minister of Local Self-Government, said the resolution had all his sympathy. As a matter of fact in making the nominations this year he had already acted upon the principle recommended. Wherever it was possible he had nominated one member to a Municipal Board to represent the depressed classes. The Minister, however, regretted his inability to accept the resolution as it stood. The Government could make only two nominations in the Municipal Boards of Agra and Cawnpore and at these two places the Government could not restrict their choice to the depressed classes only.

After some further discussion the resolution was amended by **Thakur Manjit Singh Rathore** to read as follows :—" This Council recommends to the Government to arrange that at least one member from among the depressed classes shall be nominated to each municipality and as far as possible in the notified areas in the United Provinces.

The resolution, as amended, was adopted by the Council.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi FASIHUDDIN moved : " This Council recommends to the Government to issue instructions to all record and settlement officers to the effect that they should not force or ask zemindars to pay for coolies employed by amins for doing survey work, or to supply such coolies at their own expenses.

After a prolonged discussion, the resolution was adopted by the Council.

Translation of Science Books.

Pandit Yajna Narayan UPADHYA moved : This Council recommends to the Government to establish a bureau of translation for rendering all useful books in modern sciences and other branches of knowledge into the vernacular, and to provide at least one lakh of rupees every year for this purpose."

Mr. A. H. MACKENZIE, Director of Public Instruction, said he appreciated the intention of the mover. It was not possible for the large majority of men in these Provinces to get a glimpse into the untold wealth of scientific literature, for lack of readable vernacular books on the subject. He could not commit the Education Department in any way but he would not oppose it.

The resolution was adopted by the Council.

Retiring Home Member.

At this stage the President of the Council announced to the House that within a fortnight the **Maharaja of Mahmudabad** was relinquishing charge of the office of Home Member, an office he had held since the inauguration of the Reformed Council. Before taking his seat the President paid a glowing tribute to the services rendered to the Province by the **Maharaja** as a Member of the Executive Council.

The announcement of the President was followed by valedictory speeches from every quarter of the House.

The Council concluded the last day of its winter session and adjourned till January, 1926.

Bengal Legislative Council

CALCUTTA—12TH AUGUST 1925.

The August Session.

The first meeting of the August session of the Bengal Legislative Council was held on the 12th August. Sir Evan Cotton, the President of the Council, presided.

After the new members had taken the oath of allegiance, the President made reference to the death of Sir Stenart Bayley, Mr. C. R. Das, and Sir Surendranath Banerjea.

Referring to Mr. C. R. Das and Sir Surendranath Banerjea Sir Evan Cotton said: "Leaders may be of many kinds, but one attribute which is essential to success as a leader is a magnetic and commanding personality. This quality was possessed in the fullest degree by the two great men whose death we are deploring. Mr. Das had been a member since 1921, and the Council Chamber will seem a very different place without him. To me he always conveyed the picture of a great Roman Senator, and I used to sit and watch with admiration the consummate skill with which he led his party. Of Sir Surendranath, we can truly say that, during his long life of 78 years, he stood for the whole history of politics in Bengal. He had a long tenure of office in the Bengal Council, and was one of the first Ministers under the Reforms Act. The eloquence of these two great men was not alike, but there is not one of us who will not miss the silvery tongue of Sir Surendranath, and the calm compelling voice of Mr. Das.

The only other item was the election of the President. Out of three candidates Kumar Shibsekhareswar Roy secured the largest number of votes.

Next day, the 13TH AUGUST, Kumar Shibsekhareswar Roy, the first elected President of the Bengal Legislative Council presided over the discussions of the Council, his election having been approved by the Governor. After taking his seat, Kumar Shibsekhareswar paid an eloquent tribute to Sir Evan Cotton, the retiring President.

The Howrah Bridge Bill.

The Legislative business consisted of the reference of the Howrah Bridge Bill to a Select Committee of 24 members, and the introduction and passing of the Bengal Highways Bill.

Mr. T. EMERSON, in moving that the Howrah Bridge Bill be referred to a Select Committee, said that at the August session of 1924 a Select Committee was appointed by the votes of that Council, but, as a result of a subsequent motion that the Bill should be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinions, the appointment of the Select Committee fell through. It was for that reason that a fresh Committee was proposed to be appointed at that session. The result of the circulation of the Bill for the purpose of eliciting opinions had been to show that the weight of opinion generally was against the expense that would be incurred in constructing a permanent bridge for which purpose that Bill was originally framed. The Bill, however, admitted of modifications in its taxation clauses, so as to provide for a semi-permanent bridge, if such a type was preferred by the Council on account of its smaller cost. Omitting from consideration bridges of the pier and girders type, as they were considered inadvisable on account of the risk to the Fort owing to the possible effect of the piers on the course of the river and its tides, there were three main types of bridge which were considered suitable for their purpose: first, a cantilever bridge, the cost of which would be Rs. 32 lakhs per annum spread over 60 years; second, a turn floating bridge, which would cost with its approaches Rs. 24 lakhs per annum for 40 years; and, thirdly, an improved and wider single floating bridge on the present site, the cost of which was estimated to be Rs. 15 lakhs per annum for 40 years.

Continuing, Mr. Emerson said the finance clause of the Bill provided for raising by taxation the amount required to meet the loan charges for the capital cost of a permanent bridge of the cantilever type as recommended by the Committee of Engineers. If the construction of such a bridge were undertaken, the Government of India would

consent to the taxation specified in clause 8, sub-clauses 3, 4, and 5. If, on the other hand, a bridge of a semi-permanent type were to be constructed, such as a floating bridge, taxation under those sub-clauses would have to be omitted from the Bill. Though adhering to the opinion that the need of Calcutta could be met adequately only by the provisions of a permanent bridge, the Government, in view of the great weight of opinion opposed to the expense that would be involved in its construction, were prepared to accept the Council's decision as to the cost that should be incurred in constructing the new bridge. It would be the duty of the Select Committee to consider all the opinions that have been elicited by the circulation of the Bill, and to give full weight to such opinions in making their recommendations to the Council.

Dacca University Bill

Sir Abdur Rahim then introduced a Bill further to amend the Dacca University Bill. There were several amendments, which were being discussed when the Council adjourned.

On the 14TH AUGUST the Dacca University Amendment Bill was passed. Both the amendments moved by Swarajists, one urging the circulation of the Bill, and the other referring it to a Select Committee, were defeated by 15 votes. The Bill aimed at making statutory the provision of Rs. 5 lakhs, which the Council granted for the last five years. The Bill was passed without opposition.

There was a lively discussion on the supplementary demand made by Sir Hugh Stephenson of Rs. 14,000 for expenditure under "Band Establishment of the Governor." Sir Hugh explained that in the last year's Budget, the original demand for this purpose of Rs. 80,000 was reduced to Rs. 34,250. It was impossible to maintain a fine orchestra with that amount. Several amendments refusing the demand were negatived, and the demand was ultimately granted, after which the Council adjourned.

On the 19TH AUGUST the Council carried three resolutions without opposition from the Government.

The first resolution was for a grant of 30 lakhs to the Calcutta University Post Graduate Department. The Government did not oppose it, but wanted time to examine the demand. The resolution passed unanimously.

The second resolution recommended the removal of the sex disqualification from the electoral rolls. This resolution was opposed by some of the Mahomedan and orthodox Hindu members. It was carried by 54 votes against 38.

The third resolution asked the Bengal Government to communicate to the India Government that the Bengal Council were in favour of the transfer of Sylhet to Bengal.

The Government wanted time to ascertain the views of the Assam Government on the subject, but the resolution was carried, unopposed.

Removal of Sex-disqualification.

Ladies invaded the public galleries of the Council Hall in anticipation of a lively debate on the question of the enfranchisement of women. Mrs. Sarala Devi Chaudhurani and Miss Ganguly made the women's demonstration inside the Chamber a success, and their presence immensely influenced the votes.

The question was left to be decided by a free vote. The Swaraj Party also adopted the same attitude. Mr. Nurul Huq announced that the Swaraj Party had no mandate on the resolution and that the question was left to a free vote. This announcement caused widespread disappointment among the ladies in the galleries, who had expected the solid votes of the Swarajists in their favour.

Eloquent speeches were made by Dr. Moreno, Mr. F. E. James, Mr. Umesh Chandra Bose, and Dr. Mohini Das and Mr. Nirmal Chandra Chander in favour of the enfranchisement of women.

Dr. MORENO, who moved the motion for removing the sex-disqualification said, Bombay and Madras had enfranchised women. Why should women in Bengal alone be not enfranchised? He could not understand what insurmountable difficulties there were in the way of the enfranchisement of women.

Mr. Ghaznavi, an ex-Minister, opposing the resolution, read a long manuscript speech.

Mr. Umesh Chandra Bose (Swarajist) in a powerful speech supported the resolution.

Mr. F. E. James warned that there was no rational principle in disqualifying a large section of the community from the franchise. It was the fundamental right of women-citizens to participate in legislation. Europeans had no right to oppose the resolution as their women had earned that right.

Dr. Mohini Das, wanted to know how they could refuse to grant women their just rights and at the same time demand Swaraj.

Mr. Nirmal Chandra Chunder said, "You are refusing women the right to serve the country. You ask women to come to the Congress, to come to the Liberal Federation, and to come to the Swarajist meetings. Can you refuse them permission to come to the elections?"

The resolution granting franchise to women was passed by 54, against 38 votes.

Swarajists and Ministers' Salaries.

On the 20TH AUGUST the House transacted Government business. Supplementary grants, most of which were not granted by the Council at the last Budget discussion, were presented. A large number of motions for reduction or refusal were proposed in respect of a demand of Rs. 3,82,985 for Education. There were altogether 12 demands for the grant, and most of them were carried without serious opposition. In 10 demands, excepting grants under Police and Education, there were 124 motions for either refusal or reduction, but only eight were moved.

The President announced that the Governor was not prepared to grant an extra day for non-official business alone, but as an extra day was required for Government business he allotted Friday the 21st for that purpose, and at the end of the Government business non-official business would as a special concession be taken.

Taking advantage of this announcement the Swarajist party, who were responsible for most of the amendments, decided to endeavour to finish the official business on this day, so that no non-official business could come before this session of the Council, and the resolution granting salaries to the four Ministers for their actual period of work would be left unmoved. At the end of the business, however, the President announced that the Governor would allow the Council to meet next day for the transaction of non-official business.

The Council, without a division, granted a total sum of Rs. 11,51,768 as supplementary grants. In this session the total supplementary grants agreed to amounted to Rs. 12,83,638.

On the 21ST AUGUST three non-official resolutions were discussed and the Government opposed all of them.

The first resolution demanded the appointment of a Committee to revise the Bengal Local Self-Government Act and the Bengal Village Self-Government Act. It was carried.

The second resolution, moved by Mr. F. E. James and supported by Mr. J. Campbell Forester, urged the exemption of theatres and cinemas from liability to pay the Amusements Tax. The Government opposed the motion on the ground of financial loss. The resolution was supported by Swarajists and carried by 65 votes against 27.

Motion for Production of imprisoned M.L.C.s.

The third resolution urged that Babu Anil Baran Ray and Babu Satyendra Chandra Mitra, two Bengal Ordinance prisoners, who have been returned to the Council from the Bankura and Noakhali constituencies, respectively, be brought up for taking the oath of allegiance, at the next session of the Bengal Legislative Council.

The Deputy President, Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, in supporting the resolution said :—

"I do not know from which point of view I could best support it. But I feel I would have ample grounds for doing so from any reasonable point of view. Firstly, I would do so because we know that there is absolutely no justification for their incarceration. They were the heart and soul, the spirit and fire of the Swaraj Movement. Justification there was because their presence inspired and their self-sacrifice enthused, but of the charges that have been levelled against them, they are absolutely innocent. I know that our voice and our testimony, nay the voice and testimony of the great tribune of the people, is as naught, compared with the inspired reports of the lowest spy, but I do hereby give my testimony and I speak for all others who knew them, that they were blameless of the infamous charges on which they were arrested. Secondly, I would support the resolution on all the rational grounds advanced so ably by Mr. S. C. Basu. If you have given them the right to stand, the right to be elected, you must give them the right to attend. Thirdly, I would support the resolution because I want to see them. When the figure of Satyendranath Mitra rises before me, so gentle, so kind, and yet, so brave, I feel a fierce indignation at the injustice that has condemned him to a felon's cell. I want to see them, to clasp them by the hand. I want to congratulate them. On the glory of martyrdom they have attained. I want to be inspired by their presence if it is in me to be inspired. I know the Government is afraid of demonstration. The whole of Bengal will flock to pay its homage to its leaders, who have suffered for its sake and we shall pay to them the homage of a suffering people for its suffering heroes."

The resolution was declared carried. Maulvi Nurul Haq Choudhary demanded a division which was granted, 54 members voted for the motion and 24 against it.

The Council was then prorogued.

The December Session

Bengal Tenancy Amendment Bill.

The cold weather session of the Bengal Legislative Council met on the **3RD DECEMBER**. Kumar Shibsekhareswar Roy, President, took the chair.

After withdrawing the Bengal Local Self-Government Bill, the Maharaja of NADIA introduced the Bengal Tenancy Act Amendment Bill. He said that details relating to the advantages to be derived by tenants including rights to trees, greater facility for the payment of rent, abolition of the harassing system of the realisations of rent by distraint, the commutation of produce rent, also the advantages relating to landlords namely, facilities for the realisation of rent, and other matters were dealt with in the statement of objects and reasons. The position of the Government was that they had accepted the necessity of a change in the law relating to certain matters affecting the relations of landlords and tenants. They thought that the proposals made by the Committee which considered those relations were an honest attempt to solve the difficult problem. The Bill was referred to a select committee.

On the **4TH DECEMBER** Government sustained three consecutive defeats without much discussion.

The Maharaja of Nadia asked leave to introduce the Bengal Municipal Bill, but leave was denied, 36 voting for and 60 against.

The Council next passed the Food Adulteration Bill, validating the grant by the Chairman of the Municipality of sanction to prosecute.

Sir Hugh Stephenson moved a resolution asking the Government of India to abstain from taking measures for the inclusion of Sylhet in the Bengal Presidency on financial grounds. The resolution was negatived by 64 votes against 46.

Mr. J. Donald moved a resolution urging the Government to contribute towards the cost of the Bally Railway. He said that this scheme of a bridge over the Hughli River near Bally was sanctioned ten years ago but was not executed owing to the War. The people of Bally wanted the provision of roadways for ordinary traffic, and to meet this cost he was asking the Government to contribute. This bridge had nothing to do with the Howrah Bridge. This motion was also negatived, 41 voting for and 62 against it.

Treatment of Political Detenuees.

On the **8TH DECEMBER** the Government was defeated by eight votes in a motion for the adjournment of the House.

Mr. J. N. SEN GUPTA, leader of the Swaraj Party, moved the adjournment to discuss the recent treatment of political prisoners, as evidenced by the transfer on the 22nd November last of political prisoners Jogesh Chunder Ghose, Samarendra Sen and Santosh Kumar Dutt from Berhampore jail to Hazaribagh jail without proper clothing or without giving them any notice to make provision for their journey. On the night of the 22nd November those prisoners received a chit from the Jail Superintendent that they were wanted in the office. At that time they had no clothes on the upper part of the body as they were taking exercise. They were compelled to undertake the journey that evening without any warm clothes. He questioned whether the Ordinance was being administered in the spirit and according to the letter of the law. Was there any justification for not allowing those prisoners to get their clothes from their cells? It could only be justified if there was a desire to ruin their health, so that when they came out they would not be able to allow the ordinary avocations of life.

Sir Hugh STEPHENSON, replying, said there had always been considerable difficulty in dealing with detenuees at Berhampore. In the last few months the state of indiscipline had been particularly bad, and the jail officers had been threatened with assault. The Government issued orders for the transfer of four detenuees and asked the Police Superintendent to see orders served on the four offenders. In view of the attitude of the detenuees and previous incidents, it was considered advisable to arrange for transfer without warning the detenuees. The Assistant Police Superintendent went to the jail at six in the evening to serve orders on the four detenuees. He was informed that one was unable to travel. The other three came to the jail gate and were told that they were transferred to Hazaribagh and they would have to go that night. The detenuees declined to receive orders, on the ground that they had no warm clothes. At that time the detenuees had warm coats, woollen shirts, woollen socks, rugs and sweaters and the Civil Surgeon, who was the Jail Superintendent, certified that the warm clothes they had were ample for the journey.

The Jail Superintendent then sent the warders to the detainees' cells to collect their clothing, but they were not allowed to do so and were abused. Other detainees by that time crowded in the yard opposite the gate and shouted instructions to the three detainees to resist to the end and throw off all their clothing. They had on their bodies warm shirts and chudders which they passed through the window to the other detainees in the yard. They were then only clothed in dhoties. The Police Superintendent then sent for four hospital blankets and four sheets for each of the detainees. They refused to eat any food, and the police had to lift them into the carriage. The same performance was repeated at Berhampore station, and they had to be lifted out of the carriage and put in a reserved compartment. There was no justification for regarding that incident as a piece of unwarrantable *zoolum* on the part of Government or the police.

The motion was discussed for two hours, the European and some Mahomedan members supporting the Government, the Swarajists and Nationalists supporting the motion.

The motion was passed by 58 votes to 50.

Ministers' Salaries Granted

On the 10TH DECEMBER Mr. P. N. GUHA moved that salaries for the actual period of work be given to all the four Ministers who were appointed by His Excellency, and who had to resign owing to the total refusal of their salaries by the Council.

The statement made by Mr. J. M. SEN GUPTA, giving reasons for not voting against the resolution, moved in the Council, for salaries to the four Ministers for the actual period they had worked, was not sympathetically received by the Nationalists, who had, on three previous occasions, voted with the Swarajists in opposing similar resolutions.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta explained the position of the Swaraj Party. He said when the party voted against the Ministers' salaries and threw them out, on three occasions, during the lifetime of the present Council, they made it perfectly clear that they were not actuated by personal considerations. The votes were against Dyarchy. He desired to repeat that whether it be Manvi A. K. Fazlul Huq, Mr. Surendranath Mullick, Mr. A. K. Ghuznavi or the Raja of Santosh, they were not prepared to support them as Ministers, be they Hindus or Mahomedans. They were not prepared to support the Dyarchical form of Government, with Ministers and Executive Councillors, the former being merely tools in the hands of the latter. The issue before them was not to be confounded with the issue of the continuance of Dyarchy. The two issues were distinct and separate. He wished to make it perfectly clear that, if any demand for Ministers' salaries was brought forward, for carrying on the present dyarchical system of Government, they would oppose it, whatever the constitution of the Ministry might be. On this resolution for payment of back salaries, as the party had no personal bias, or vindictiveness, against the gentlemen concerned they would vote for it. Their fight was against dyarchy, continued Mr. Sen Gupta, and until the constitution of the Government was so altered as to be acceptable to the people of India, their representatives would refuse to accept or work it; but they were not willing to act in any way which might be construed as an act against particular individuals.

The position, concluded Mr. Sen Gupta, had been made perfectly clear by the mover of the resolution, who admitted that the Ministers were wrong constitutionally, in continuing in office even after their salaries were refused. The position that the Swaraj Party took up should be no encouragement to the Government to appoint Ministers, who had no majority in the House and whose salaries were bound to be rejected, in the hope that, after they had worked as Ministers the House would be lenient and pass their salaries later on.

Nationalist opposition.

Mr. Manmatha Nath RAY (Nationalist) did not see how having voted against dyarchy, they could vote for the pay of the principal actors brought into existence by dyarchy.

Mr. Akhil Chunder DATTA (Nationalist) said the present motion had not raised any fresh issue. There was no justification for setting aside their previous decision. There was no use disguising the fact that, both personal and communal considerations had clouded the real issue. To say that the Ministers' salaries were refused out of communal bias was a perversion of truth. It had been stated that reason dictated their voting against the motion, but sympathy and sentiment impelled otherwise. As representatives of the people it was not open to them to be charitable at the cost of the taxpayer. If they did so, the speaker warned his friends, the people would bring a charge of breach of trust at their door. They were opposed to dyarchy and the Ministers

who worked for dyarchy. By paying the Ministers' salaries for a certain period they would become a part of dyarchy, so far as that period was concerned.

Mr. Bejoy Kristo BOSE, Swarajist, said that he opposed the resolution on principle, but in obedience to party discipline he could not vote against it. He would be failing in his duty if he did not point the hollowness of the motion. One of the Ministers for whom their sympathy was wanted had last year said he would work without salary.

Two of the ex-Ministers, the Raja of Santosh and Nawab Nawabali Chowdhury, refused to accept the salaries. The resolution was carried.

On the 12TH DECEMBER, the last day of the December Session, Mr. Dand moved a resolution urging the Government to take early steps to move the proper authorities to amend Rule III of the Bengal Electoral Rules, with a view to remove the present disability of the labouring classes to send their own elected representatives by granting special electoral franchise to them. The resolution was carried.

Criminal Law Amendment Act.

Rai Harendranath CHAUDHURI (Nationalist) moved that immediate steps be taken to repeal the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925. He gave the following reasons in support of his motion :—

- (1) It was a barbarous legislation, unknown in any civilised and self-governing country.
- (2) It was an emergency measure, but at present no emergency existed.
- (3) The Act had become an engine of oppression.
- (4) It was a measure to terrorise all people who were not in the good books of the all-powerful Police, controlled by an irresponsible executive.
- (5) Prisoners under this Act served long terms of imprisonment without trial.
- (6) The Act had utterly failed to achieve its purpose.
- (7) In January last, Sir Alexander Muddiman had said that it would be kept only so long as public interest demanded and not a day longer.

Mr. J. M. SEN GUPTA said that the Government adopted the measure without tackling the root cause of discontent, which was the desire for freedom. In attempting to stop that desire, the Government was following the Government of Russia and the British Government in Ireland, and he predicted that the same fate would overtake the India Government. As regards the administration of the Act, Mr. Sen Gupta said that in January last, Mr. Satyendranath Mitter, a member of the Legislative Council and Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation who had been arrested under the Act, were transferred from Berhampore to Mandalay Jail. They were brought down to Calcutta on their way, and detained one night in the dirty Police lock-up meant for drunkards and loafers. That was certainly not justified under the Act.

In Mr. Sen Gupta's opinion, the reasons why they and other prisoners were kept in an unhealthy place at Mandalay was that they should contract diseases. Some of them were suffering from insomnia, diabetes and other disease. The Jail Superintendent behaved in such a manner that there was hunger-strike. Mr. Sen Gupta knew that his was a cry in the wilderness, but he warned the authorities that they would not be able to stop the people from gaining their freedom. The Government would go the way of the British administration in Ireland, if they opposed the onward march of the people.

Sir Hugh STEPHENSON, in reply, said that, in spite of the tortures and inhumanities in jail, the detainees preferred jail to Bengal villages. He said the Government had no intention to stop the desire for freedom by force. The Government only said it was a mistaken method to try to attain freedom by terrorism. The reason why the detainees were transferred to Mandalay was that it was desirable that there should be complete isolation. The Government had, in their possession, proofs of communication between the prisoners inside the jail and terrorists. Since the Act was passed 15 arrests had been made under it. The reason for detaining the prisoners was that the conspiracy still existed. There still existed a party intent upon violence. If the Act were repealed, there was every reason to believe that the main conspiracy would swing back to the cult of terrorism.

The resolution was carried, 55 voting for and 35 against.

The Council adjourned *sine die*.

B. & O. Legislative Council

Budget for 1925 — 1926.

The Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council met at Patna on the 13TH FEBRUARY 1925 when the Hon. Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha (Finance Member), in introducing the Budget, said :—

The estimates for the current financial year, as passed last March, anticipated an opening balance of Rs. 1,69,68,000, including Rs. 32,39,000 in the Famine Insurance Fund, which we can only draw upon for actual relief operations, protective irrigation works, or other works for the prevention of famine, or the grant of loans to agriculturists under the Agriculturists Loans Act or for relief purposes. The remainder Rs. 1,37,39,000 represented the balance which could be utilised, if necessary, for more general purposes. When the accounts for 1923-24, were closed the actual opening balance for the year now current proved to be Rs. 6,25,000 in excess of the estimate or Rs. 1,75,93,000 in all. According to the latest figures available on revised estimates show a revenue of Rs. 5,31,48,000, or a shortage of Rs. 2,94,000, and under the head of expenditure from revenue an increase of Rs. 6,09,000; while our total receipts are Rs. 2,93,000 in excess, and our total expenditure is Rs. 12,55,000 in excess. The net result is that, after allowing for the increase, to which I have already referred over our budgeted opening balance, our closing balance is expected to be Rs. 1,85,81,000 or Rs. 3,37,000 below the estimate.

The total closing balance, now estimated at Rs. 1,85,81,000 includes, Rs. 39,89,000 of Famine Insurance Fund money, leaving an ordinary balance of Rs. 1,45,92,000. Our estimates for the coming year assume a revenue of Rs. 5,43,88,000 and total receipts of Rs. 5,71,49,000. On the expenditure side, exclusive of new schemes, the expenditure charged to revenue is Rs. 5,20,98,000 and the capital expenditure Rs. 18,08,000 or a total expenditure of Rs. 5,39,06,000, leaving a surplus of Rs. 32,43,000. Of this latter amount, however, Rs. 14,99,000 appertains to the Famine Insurance Fund, and the net surplus, therefore, available for general expenditure is thus reduced to Rs. 17,53,000.

New Schemes.

I now turn to the provision for new schemes in the budget. It is impossible to propose at present any reduction of taxation, which, if carried out, would seriously affect for the worse the nation-building departments. On the contrary, in future years, if local bodies do not raise their own taxation for development purposes, and the present tendency continues of expecting Government to bear all the burden of expansion, we shall obviously either have to call a halt or seek after new sources of revenue. Now our ordinary balance is estimated at Rs. 1,45,92,000 at the end of the current year. At the beginning of this year it was Rs. 1,43,33,000 and at the beginning of 1922-23 it stood at Rs. 84,77,000. Thus, by a conservative policy of husbanding our resources, we have raised that balance by Rs. 61,15,000 in three years. In the circumstances, we felt fully justified in taking the view that there was now no good reasons for striving deliberately after further accumulations at the expense of postponing indefinitely a number of sound schemes for the benefit of the tax-payer. We accordingly obtained the approval of the Government of India to draw, if necessary, on our total balance to the extent of Rs. 30,10,000 which means Rs. 15 lakhs from our ordinary balance, so that we may be able to spend this amount on useful projects. Adding this Rs. 45 lakhs from the ordinary balance, the total amount available for new schemes in the budget amounts to Rs. 52,53,000—a truly large amount of more than half a crore. This sum has been distributed between the Reserved and the Transferred sides (excluding Angul) as follows :—

	Recurring	Non-recurring	Total
Reserved	99,000	6,03,000	7,02,000
Transferred	13,48,000	31,27,000	44,75,000

A sum of Rs. 3,09,000 goes to the police of which Rs. 2,01,000 is for buildings for housing the force better and Rs. 74,000 is to supplement the stores of clothing. We have provided a further recurring grant of Rs. 5 half lakhs for primary education and Rs. one and half lakhs non-recurring, towards buildings for primary schools; also Rs. 5,30,000 for land acquisition for the long deferred University project. Under Medical, the non-recurring grant of Rs. 3 lakhs for building new dispensaries has been raised to Rs. 4 lakhs, and the recurring grant for medical relief from Rs. 2 lakhs to Rs. 3 lakhs. Under Public Health we have for the next year made a special addition of Rs. 3 half lakhs to the annual grant of Rs. 45,000 for rural water supply in order to enable a determined attempt to get ahead with this very necessary and beneficial reform. Under Industries we have provided Rs. 85,000 for a demonstration match factory at Patna and a generous sum of Rs. 5 lakhs for loans under the State Aid to Industries Act. Under Civil Works we have included two items of Rs. 40,000 each towards two much needed bridges over the Bhargovi and Burabalang rivers in the Puri and Balasore districts, respectively.

After the Finance Member's statement the different heads of the Budget were introduced by members in charge of departments.

Bettiah Court of Wards.

On the 18TH FEBRUARY, discussion was resumed of the non-official resolution that a Committee be constituted to enquire into the working of the Court of Wards, Bettiah Estate, with special reference to the strained relation between the Court of Wards and the Bettiah Municipality. His Excellency Sir Henry Wheeler was present in the distinguished Visitors' Gallery for part of the proceedings.

Mr. Hari Shanker Sinha supported the resolution.

Mr. Morrison opposed the resolution on the ground that no case had been made out for the appointment of a Committee of Enquiry and it was not the proper remedy to apply in this connection.

Mr. Foley in his speech dealt with each specific allegation and said that the blame attached to the management of the Bettiah Court of Wards.

Khan Bahadur Nawabzada Ashrafuddin Ahmed opposed the resolution observing that it was not the function of the Legislative Council to interfere with executive administration and the proper remedy for the injuries alleged to have been done to some Congress workers and Municipal Commissioners was to go to the law courts and demand redress of their alleged grievances. He concluded "Here is a sad spectacle of Swarajist municipality giving evidence of a spirit of intolerance which is so much opposed to their lofty notions and ideas of democratic government."

Mr. Sri Narayan Sahay supporting the resolution, observed that the right of the Legislative Council to enquire into the conduct of a subordinate officer was unquestioned and he urged the necessity of an enquiry.

Mr. Madan opposed the resolution on constitutional grounds and said that it was not right to be guided by irresponsible allegations made by two or three members of the Council.

Mr. Hammond, Chief Secretary, said that the debate had at least served the useful purpose of presenting before them an illuminating example of what a Swarajist Council would be in the days when Swaraj government came. He then dealt with each specific allegation made against the management of the Bettiah Court of Wards and showed that they were entirely untrue and unfounded. As to the mover's remark that Mr. Gandhi was a very shrewd man, the Chief Secretary said that he agreed with him. He had had the pleasure of working with Mr. Gandhi. He had come under his influence, he had realised his magnetism and his unselfishness, and in one matter he was utterly at one with him. He was all for charkha spinning. They had a proverb in England which said: "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do" and Mr. Gandhi thought that if the men who followed him were not occupied in spinnings they would get into mischief. The speaker continued: "So let them turn to charkha, let them make as much khaddar as they can and sell it as cheaply as they can, but do not let them come into these Councils and spin their foolish and ridiculous yarns, which they do not believe themselves and which they know the Council will not believe." (Cheers)

Sir Hugh McPherson then replied on the debate and refuted certain mis-statements and allegations made against the management of the Court of Wards, Bettiah. He reiterated that the Council was not concerned with details of administration. In conclusion he hoped that the Municipal Commissioners of Bettiah would show a change of heart and work in harmony with the management of the Court of Wards in carrying out projects of public utility.

The resolution was rejected by the Council by 44 votes to 24.

The August Session.

At the meeting of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council at Ranchi on the 19TH AUGUST the only item of business before the House was the election of the President.

Rai Bahadur Jyotish Chandra Bhattacharjee (nominated member representing the domiciled Bengali community) having withdrawn his candidature there were only two candidates, Khan Bahadur Khwaja Mahomed Noor and Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath. Khan Bahadur Khwaja Mahomed Noor secured 53 votes, while Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath secured only 28 votes.

On the 20TH AUGUST Khan Bahadur Khwaja Mahomed Noor presided over the meeting of the Council, his election having been approved by the Governor.

The President then announced the formation of a panel of chairmen for the current session consisting of Mr. Sri Naran Sahay, Babu Ram Narayan Misra, Mr. F. E. L. Morrison and Rai Bahadur P. C. Lall Choudhry.

Supplementary Grants.

Mr. B. A. Collins moved that a supplementary grant of Rs. 5,000 under Education (Reserved) for a secondary direct grant to non-Government European and Anglo-Indian schools, non-recurring, be assented to. The grant is the Government contribution towards the electric installation of St. Joseph's Convent School, Bankipur.

Babu Krishna Ballabh Sahay (Swarajist) opposed the motion on the ground that it would mean preferential treatment to Anglo-Indian boys.

Sir Hugh McPherson refuted the assertion and said the Government was prepared to provide electric installation to Indian educational institutions by meeting two-thirds of the cost of any such scheme that might be proposed after they had examined it.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. Collins then presented another supplementary grant of Rs. 74,165 under Civil Works (Transferred) for the acquisition of a factory for the establishment of an agricultural farm. The site would be more conveniently situated than the Sepaya farm and the land and buildings could be purchased for the amount of the grant. It was proposed to put forward a scheme for a buffalo breeding farm on the Sepaya site.

Babu Jaleswar Parsad opposed the motion and stated that the Sepaya farm could adequately serve their purposes.

The motion was ultimately rejected by 54 to 20 votes. Other motions were agreed to and the Council adjourned till next day.

On the 21ST AUGUST, the Council re-assembling, after interpellations the remaining eight motions for supplementary demands for grants were brought forward, and carried without opposition.

Legislative business consisted of the Bihar and Orissa Mining Settlements (Amendment) Bill, 1925, and the Chota Nagpur Rural Police (Amendment) Bill, 1925.

B. & O. Mining Settlements (Amend.) Bill.

The Hon. Ganesh Dutta Singh, introducing the first-named Bill, said that it proposed to amend the Mining Settlements Act in order to provide that the Jharia Mines Board of Health could keep the balances of its fund in any bank or branch bank used as a Government treasury. The motion was adopted.

Chota-Nagpur Rural Police Amend. Bill.

Sir Hugh McPherson, introducing the Chota Nagpur Rural Police (amendment) Bill, 1925, said the Bill referred to the problem of dealing with crime in the coalfields. The mining area had become a happy hunting ground for criminals, and it had long been plain that the ancient watch and ward system of rural India was here an anachronism. The remedy proposed in the Bill was to substitute for the existing chaukidars a constabulary force which would be disciplined under the Police Act, and to levy from the collieries concerned a contribution towards the extra cost, more or less equal to the amount which might be levied under the present Chota Nagpur Police Act. The remainder of the cost would be provided from the public revenues.

The member representing the Indian Mining Federation raised several points regarding the measure, and the Government expressed its willingness to refer the Bill to a select committee.

Mr. D. M. Madan (representing the industrial interests) opposed the measure, stating that it was most inopportune to levy a tax at the present time on the coal industry.

The amendment for reference of the Bill to a select committee was finally carried without a division.

Supplementary Grants Refused.

On the 25TH AUGUST four amendments to the Standing Orders of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council were moved and referred to a Select Committee of the House to be formed later, and two supplementary demands for grants were discussed. Both were token demands, one for the construction of quarters for members of the Legislative Council at Ranchi (Doranda) and the other for the construction of a residence for the Chief-Secretary at Ranchi.

These demands were brought forward by the Government to meet the demand for the proper accommodation of members of Legislative Council, as in the previous years the quarters proved insufficient for the purpose.

Sir Hugh McPherson, in asking the House to accept these demands, observed that the general conclusion arrived at by the Housing Committee, which met the day before was that they should build one set of quarters of a superior bungalow pattern at Ranchi. The present Chief Secretary's House should also be taken over and utilised, partly for the residence of the President of the Council and partly for a hostel or common room for members; also two blocks of quarters should be built for members, one on the lines of the existing B type quarters and others of the dak-bungalow type on the site on which the present Chief Secretary's House stood, and which was very near the Secretariat. This would involve the construction of a new house for the Chief Secretary, which it was proposed to build at Ranchi.

The motion for a supplementary grant for the construction of quarters for members of the Council was rejected, as also the second token demand for the construction of a residence for the Chief Secretary.

Irrigation Facilities.

On the 27TH AUGUST the Council reassembled to discuss non-official resolutions which were purely of local interest.

Kumar Rajivaranjan Prasad Sinha moved a resolution urging the construction of an irrigation canal from some suitable river in the Bhabua sub-division in the district of Shahabad.

The Hon. Mr. S. Sinha, for the Government, stated that a scheme for irrigation facilities to that part had been under the consideration of the Government for sometime past. The cost of a tentative scheme regarding a reservoir in that area was estimated at about Rs. 21 lakhs. If it were possible a provision for it would be made in the next Budget.

The resolution was ultimately adopted by the Council.

Another resolution asking for the introduction of legislation with a view to requiring the previous approval of the Council to a revision of canal water rates was carried in spite of Government opposition.

Land Rent in Orissa.

Mr. Jagabandhu Sinha moved that the rent on certain lands in Orissa be not enhanced. The mover said that the paying capacity of the tax-payer was not taken into account by the Government in adjusting rents.

Sir Hugh McPherson for the Government in opposing the motion said that Oriya ryots had been sympathetically treated by the Government and the assessments imposed were very moderate. There was no part of the Province on which the Government had spent more for improving agriculture than Orissa. The resolution was ultimately negatived.

Another resolution for appointing Hindi and Urdu reporters to record the Vernacular debates of the Council was carried.

AUGUST 28TH was the last day of the autumn session of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council.

In view of the sympathetic reply of the Government Mr. Mabarak Ali withdrew his resolution regarding closing of public offices, courts and educational institutions for three successive days after the 29th of Ramzan (fasting month.)

Another resolution moved by Mr. Rameshwar Prashad Singh demanding the representation of the Legislative Council and local bodies on the Text Book Committee for Primary and Secondary Education was adopted without a division.

This completed the business of the session and the Council was prorogued.

C. P. Legislative Council

Governor's Opening Speech.

Sir Montagu Butler, addressing the Central Provinces Legislative Council on the 3RD AUGUST said that when he last addressed them he appealed to the Councillors for their co-operation, particularly in the direction of financing nation-building projects. The Council, said His Excellency, met him more than half way by voting the greater part of the demands, and he recognised that a loaf was better than no bread, and that three-quarters was better still. His Excellency expressed his thanks in person, and said that his Government appreciated this change of attitude.

After paying a tribute to the officers of His Government Sir Montagu narrated the steps taken by him after the last Council session. His Government withdrew the special instructions to the District Officers to take active steps to explain the action of the Council in refusing to vote supplies. As regards the holding of District Durbars, His Excellency assured them that he would not delegate this duty to any subordinate officer.

After explaining the further steps taken by the Government to meet the wishes of the Council, Sir Montagu Butler said: "I had hoped when the last session ended to lay before you once more a demand for the Ministers' salaries, and I continued strong in this hope until recent events changed, for the time being, the political atmosphere. From the statements made publicly by the responsible leaders of the dominant party amongst you as reported in the Press it has been made to appear that their present policy is to harness the political future of this Province to Bengal. Whether this is so or not, and whether, if it is so, the policy is a wise one in the interests of this Province, I am not concerned to argue. It is for you yourselves to judge whether our Province has had so much political education in the past as to be able to afford to neglect the present opportunity for gaining political experience. My duty is to face the present situation. Obviously, if you do not want yourselves to administer the wide range of subjects included under the Transferred head, it is idle for me to ask you to vote salaries for the Ministers of your own choosing to hold the portfolios. At the same time, I wish to make it clear that the decision is yours, and not mine, and that the responsibility for the retardation of the political progress of the Province is with you, and not me or my Government. We have settled, therefore, to come to no decision on the question of presenting a demand for the Ministers' salaries until you have had a chance of consulting together and formulating final opinions. We are ready, nay anxious, to see you take up your responsibilities, and will put forward a demand for salaries next Saturday, or some subsequent day in this session, provided we get a lead from you. To this I propose to invite the leaders of the dominant party amongst you to confer with me during the next few days in order to hear from them at first hand what are their wishes."

Late Mr. C. R. Das.

After the Governor's address Mr. Tambe, the President, made a reference to the death of Mr. C. R. Das and was followed by Dr. Moonje, Swarajist leader, Mr. S. M. Chitnavis, Liberal leader, and Sir Bertram Standen on behalf of the Government. The Council then proceeded with the interpellations, of which there were 274.

Sir Bertram Standen next moved that in view of the remission by the Government of India of Rs. 9 lakhs out of the Provincial contribution some specified appropriations be made and that supplementary demands be presented for the sums which can be spent on the specified objects in the current year. Excepting Rs. 25,000 for the construction and improvement of forest road, the rest of the amount will be spent on the Transferred Departments, such as education and medical relief. Over Rs. 4 half lakhs have been specified for the promotion of education out of which Rs. 65,000 will be given to the University Library and Rs. 1,50,000 to the Science College hostel and Rs. 1 half lakhs for three high schools in Berar, at Buldana, Morsi and Basim.

On the 5TH AUGUST only one important resolution was passed that an Advisory Board be constituted to advise the Government in the selection of Honorary Magistrates. On the 6th August 29 resolutions were on the paper, but so little interest was taken in the proceedings that no less than 17 movers were absent and the majority of motions were withdrawn at once after a short explanation from the Government. Two were passed, one relating to an increase of the pay of Assistant Medical Officers and the other recommending an irrigation survey of Berar.

No Demand for Ministers.

On the 7TH AUGUST Sir Bertram Standen, Revenue Member, announced that in pursuance of the undertaking given in his address to the Council on the 3rd August, the Governor invited Dr. Moonje, Mr. Raghavendra Rao and Mr. B. G. Khaparde to confer with him. The meetings took place on the 5th and 6th August. Dr. Moonje and Mr. Raghavendra Rao were unwilling to accept office and Mr. B. G. Khaparde represented that the Berar section were not unwilling to accept, but did not think that a stable Ministry would result and so declined. In the circumstances no demand will be presented to-morrow for salaries for Ministers.

Mr. Raghavendra Rao, Swarajist, moved for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Municipalities Act, the object of which is to disqualify Honorary Magistrates from standing for election, selection or nomination as members of a Municipal Committee. Another clause is intended to extend the disqualifying period of imprisonment from six months to five years.

Sir M. V. Joshi, Home Member, opposed the Bill and pointed out that the dominant party in the Council aimed by means of this Bill to keep out men who were inconvenient and embarrassing to them in their elections. He wanted specific instances of Honorary Magistrates who had unduly influenced or otherwise interfered with elections before disqualifying and disfranchising them.

On the 8TH AUGUST after interpellations the President referred to the unexpected death of Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee. Sir Bertram Standen, Mr. P. E. Raghavendra Rao and Mr. S. M. Chitnavis associated themselves with an expression of grief and mentioned in brief the achievements of the departed leader. Then the resolutions moved by Sir Bertram Standen regarding the appropriation of 9 lakhs regarding certain specific purpose was accepted.

Mr. Kolhe moved an amendment that the provision for an extension of the central Museum at Nagpur be omitted. Sir Bertram opposed the amendment on the ground that money was required for good purpose. Mr. S. M. Chitnavis assured the house that the money was needed. The amendment was put to vote and lost by 12 votes against 34 votes.

An amendment stood in the name of Mr. D. K. H. Kane that instead of a grant for the University Library of Rs. 65,000 the amount should be given for the introduction of compulsory primary education. This was withdrawn. The grant was voted.

Mr. G. S. Gupta moved and Mr. Thakur Chhedilal seconded that grant of Rs. 150,000 to the Science Collage Hostel, Nagpur be reduced by Rs. 75,008. Mr. R. H. Backett on behalf of the Government opposed the motion on the ground that it was proposed to make it an entire and self-contained college which would leave pressure on the Morris Hialop Colleges. The amendment was put to vote and lost. Another amendment of Mr. R. H. Backett to increase the grant from 1 and a half lakhs to Rs. 164,000 was put to vote and declared lost. The sum of Rs. 50,000 for the aided Anglo-Vernacular School in Berar and Rs. 40,000 for manual training in Berar were voted. Mr. G. S. Gupta proposed that the sum of Rs. 50,000 be added to appropriation of Rs. 1,50,000 proposed for three High Schools in Berar. Mr. K. P. Pande opposed the grant and referred to the injustice of the Sims Committee report which deprived the people of the Central Provinces of several advantages. After some more speeches in which there was good deal of wrangling between claims of Berar and Central Provinces, the appropriation was put to vote and declared carried.

The Council next discussed other supplementary grants covered by appropriation. There were 29 amendments to the resolution regarding the allocation of 9 lakhs remitted by the Government of India but ultimately after protracted and uninteresting discussion lasting for 5 hours the House voted for all demands including extra demand of Rs. 50,000 for one high school at Drug. Another demand of Rs. 4,50,000 to be given to Nagpur Municipality as loan for improvement of water distribution system and extension of sewage farm was also passed without opposition. The Council next voted Rs. 2,60,000 under the head civil works transferred.

At the close of the proceedings the president referred with regret the impending retirement of Sir Bertram Standen and enumerated his good qualities of head and heart especially his impartial services as leader of the house. Dr. B. S. Moonje on behalf of his party reciprocated with the feeling.

The Hon'ble Sir Bertram suitably replied and thanked the members of the house for their co-operation. He said he was really very much sorry to have his connection severed from the province where he spent the best part of the life. The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

FORTIETH SESSION OF THE

Indian National Congress

CAWNPORE—26TH DECEMBER 1925

The Opening Day

The 40th session of the Indian National Congress commenced on the 26th December afternoon in a spacious pandal. Decorations were simple. Khaddar was, as usual, extensively used. Portraits of Leaders on the dais were those of Mahatma Gandhi, Lok. Tilak, Pt. Malaviya, Deshbandhu Das and Pt. Motilal. Oil paintings of Deshbandhu C. R. Das and Lok. Tilak were prominently placed. Unlike other sessions mottos were few and taken from quotations of pithy sayings of various leaders—"Be Honest"—(Gandhi) "End or Mend"—(Deshbandhu) "Deeds not Words"—(Lajpatrai) "Home Rule is our Birthright"—(Tilak). The main motto in front of the dais declared "Unity is Strength." Delegates and visitors began to pour in from 12 noon. Lady delegates and visitors were quite numerous.

Great Confusion.

At 1-30 a considerable stir was caused by Ajmere-Merwara Delegates trying to force their way into the pandal. They numbered about sixty and held themselves entitled to attend the Congress in defiance of the Congress Subjects Committee's ruling invalidating their election. A large number of volunteers had to be collected to prevent the onrush. Doors were barred and volunteers armed with lathis formed a cordon. Still the Ajmer delegates, who had determined to fight their way in, continued to press and refused to disperse in spite of persuasion by the volunteers who cried "no violence please" But Mr. Arjunlal Sethi, leader of the Ajmer delegates, lay across the entrance and a few delegates of other provinces in their hurry to get in trampled upon him. By this time the pandal was packed though not very fully. After some time the rush was controlled and the Ajmere delegates were kept out. Sj. Arjunlal Sethi soon regained consciousness but another Ajmere delegate had to be taken out as he also wanted to force in. Some minor injuries were reported in two or three cases.

By 2-30 the leaders arrived in a procession, the band playing. Pandit Motilal entered first with Lala Lajpat Rai on his right. Dr. Murarilal came next with Moulana Abul Kalam Azad. Mahatma Gandhi's appearance was the occasion for shouts of "Gandhikijai" and next came in order Moulana Mahomed Ali, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Mr. J. N. Sen Gupta, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Mr. V. J. Patel, Mr. Vallabhai Patel, Shiva Prosad Gupta, Rajendra Prosad, Doctor Ansari, Mr. Purshottamdas Tandan, Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Swami Shradhanand and Mr. N. C. Kelkar. A number of distinguished persons were on the dais. Over a dozen European ladies and gentlemen were present including Mr. and Mrs. Hubley and Dr. Rutherford, and Miss Slade. Dr. Abdur Rahaman and

other members of the South African Indian Deputation were also on the dais. The other Indian leaders present included Munshi Ishwar Saran, Dr. Kailash Nath Katju, C. V. S., Narasinha, Mr. Mohamed Safee, Khan Bahadur Sarafraz Hussain Khan, Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer, Mr. Duni Chand, Mr. Barucha, Mr. Deepnarain Singh, Lala Hansraj, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Mr. Prakasam, Mr. Abhyanker, Dr. Moonji, Mr. Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, Swami Govindram, Mr. Goswami, Mr. Chamanlal and Mr. D. P. Sinha.

Proceedings began at 2-45 P.M. The pandal was packed to overflow by over fifteen thousand people. Only the Ajmere-Merwar gallery was vacant. The proceedings began with national songs all standing. After Vishnu Digambar and others had sung, Dr. Murarilal delivered his address as Chairman of the Reception Committee. He narrated the difficulties put in their way by the authorities and declared that non-co-operation was not dead but had taken firm root. He took fifteen minutes to deliver his speech. The following is the summary of his address.

Chairman's Address

In the course of his speech Dr. MURARILAL said that at the time of extending invitation to Cawnpore they had great hopes and high aspirations about according a reception befitting the dignity of the representatives of the National Assembly, but combination of causes stood in their way. Besides difficulties which faced the country they had to contend with local difficulties. After referring to deaths of Mr. C. R. Das and Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee he mentioned the Hindu-Muslim tension which in Cawnpore however led to no untoward happenings. The Opponents of Indian National progress, seeing their temporary weakness, had begun to talk despairingly of their policy and programme, but they had not grasped the full significance of their peaceful methods of work. Mutual recriminations had led many a seasoned soldier to relax his interest in healthy national activities. Their workers were handicapped for want of adequate financial aid owing to depression in trade. The economic policy of Government was one of heartless and cruel exploitation. Organised pillage of the disarmed nation had undermined their manhood and the deadly evil of poverty had made the lives of millions unbearable. Despite these and several other discouraging factors like obtaining site for Congress they worked undaunted and there was the Kakori trial which had snatched away many of their ardent and sincere workers, many of whom had not been even admitted to bail. Those incidents painfully reminded them of the low value that was attached by bureaucratic Government to their rights of liberty and citizenship but he was confident about the success of their struggle. The gospel of non-co-operation had shaken off their frightful terror of coercion and intimidation. To say that the movement was dead was to ignore facts. They might have temporary set-backs but at no distant date the movement would bear fruit.

After the Chairman's Speech Dr. Abdur RAHAMAN, leader of the South Africa Indian Deputation, in a short speech said the Deputation was presenting to one of the greatest women of the world (Mrs. Naidu) her photo. The South African Indians had given India the greatest living man (applause). "Mahatmaji belongs to us (applause). Mrs. Naidu also belongs to us. You will have to give us at least one of the two to go to South Africa and fight our battle. If we take the greatest woman of India we are leaving behind her

photograph so that you may look at it and be satisfied. We present this photo to our mother and our aunt in token of love of the South African Indians."

MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY

Mr. Girdhari Lal then read the following messages received from eminent persons wishing success of the Congress :—

Sjta. Basanti Debi (widow of Mr. C. R. Das) asked the President to light up undying fire and let the united nation rise out of smouldering ashes purified and strong. India's freedom's battle must be made a worthy fight for which Deshabandhu Das gave his life and for which two hundred of their sons were abiding their time behind prison-bars.

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore requested Mrs. Naidu to direct the Congress to love and service to the cradle of the people. The great mother's milk for her children had run dry through poverty, ignorance, disease and disunion, where life was waning and light of joy was nearly extinct.

Mr. B. Chakravarti urged a policy by which to consolidate national forces and make national demand irresistible.

Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachari (Salem) suggested the constitution of a committee for drafting Indian constitution to be adopted in a special session of the Congress.

Mrs. Annie Besant wired: "May Congress be guided by you along the path to Home Rule by union of all parties who work for India's freedom and revive her splendid past."

Hon. Mr. G. S. Khaparde wanted Mrs. Naidu to restore the Congress to its truly political character with responsive co-operation as the settled policy.

Lord Sinha sincerely hoped there would be great gathering and a successful session.

Mr. Jinnah said the immediate issue was securing the revision of the present constitution, but any action of principle of direct action would be fraught with serious consequences and imperil political advance.

The Indian Congress Committee of Nairobi said, unless the whole of India was united and attained Swaraj, all efforts to secure equal status for Indians in British colonies and foreign countries would be futile.

The Transvaal Indians through their committee asked the Congress to support the South African Deputation. The Pretoria British Indians' Association made a similar request.

Hon. Syed Raza Ali from Maritzburg wired appealing for modification of the constitution to admit all parties.

The Presidential Address

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the first Indian lady to preside over the National Congress, then proceeded to the rostrum and received a great ovation. She spoke for over an hour extempore. Her printed address no doubt briefly covered most of what she said, but she spoke at the spur of the moment without restricting to language used in the address. She kept the audience spell-bound. The following is the full text of her Address :—

"Friends—Were I to ransack all the treasures of human language I fear I should fail to discover words of adequate power or beauty to translate my deep and complex emotion in acknowledging the signal honour you have done me, by entrusting to my unskilled hands the high burden and responsibility of so exalted an office, which for two score years has been ennobled by the brilliant and memorable achievement of my distinguished predecessors both of our own and of alien race. I am fully aware that you have bestowed upon me the richest gift in your possession, not merely as gracious recompense for such trivial service as I may have been privileged to render at home or abroad; but rather in generous tribute to Indian womanhood and as token of your loyal recognition of its legitimate place in the secular and spiritual counsels of the nation. In electing me to be the chief among your chosen servants, through a period so fraught with grave issues and fateful decisions, you have not treated a novel precedent. You have only reverted to an old tradition and restored to Indian woman the classic position she once held in a happier epoch of our country's story: symbol and guardian alike of the hearth-fires, the altar-fires and the beacon-fires of her land. Poignantly conscious as I am of my own utter unworthiness to interpret so exquisite, so austere an ideal of wisdom, devotion, and sacrifice, as embodied through the ages in the radiant heroines of our history and legend, I trust, that to the fulfilment of the lofty task you have allotted me, even I might bring some glowing ember of the immortal faith that illumined the vigil of Sita in her forest exile, and bore the feet of Savitri undaunted to the very citadels of Death.

"The accepted convention of this august assembly imposes upon me, alas, the duty of placing before you a formal document of plans and policies of work for the coming year. I therefore, contrary to the impulse and custom of a life-time, am vainly groping for appropriate phrases that might serve dimly to foreshadow some of the thoughts that can only find spontaneous expression when I stand in your midst and the inspiration of your living presence shall give to my heart its voice of hope, and to my words their wings of fire.

Homage to Departed.

"Before we reach the central purpose of our labours in this northern city, to which we have journeyed from the farthest ends of India, let us offer our mournful homage to the memory of our illustrious dead—to that great patriarch of our national renaissance, Surendranath Bannerjee, who for well-nigh half a century assailed the heavens with the thunders of his splendid oratory in indignation at the burning wrongs of his people; to Ramakrishna Bhandarkar, the famous Scholar of the Deccan, who with patient and dedicated hands rekindled the lamps of our ancient Sanskrit culture, and lifted it high above the clamour and conflict of political throngs; to Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das, kingliest of dreamers, whose whole being was a Vaishnavite rhapsody of incomparable passion for the liberty of his motherland, who died with his hand outstretched in a royal gesture of reconciliation towards a powerful antagonist against whom he had fought so often with such reckless and victorious chivalry.

"Would that he were with us to-day to guide us aright in our anxious deliberations and help us to apprehend the true and tragic significance of the stupendous problems that call for immediate settlement and cannot with impunity be deferred to a more convenient season. A singular combination

of domestic and international circumstances has conspired to implicate us against our will and almost without our knowledge in a labyrinth of intricate and unparalleled difficulties that threaten the stability and integrity of our national existence. Our imperative duty, therefore, is to survey with eyes unhooded of their habitual illusion, the sinister and melancholy spectacle of our abject helplessness born of our foolish disunion and nourished by our long dependence upon the caprice or the compassion of Imperial policies. What means shall we devise, what schemes shall we evolve to deliver ourselves from the manifold dangers that encompass us? How shall we combat the deadly forces of expression that challenge our human rights of liberty, how defeat the further encroachment of ruthless and rapacious Imperialist exploitation that despoils the remnants of our moral and material heritage? How circumvent the insidious and ingenious aggressions of other foreign races eager to profit by the conditions of our economic and intellectual servitude? How shall we avert the implacable doom that menaces our unfortunate kindred in the Colonies, how quell the rampant forces of reaction or divert the disaster of our internecine feuds?

Non-Violent Non-Co-Operation.

"The answers that we need are fully enshrined in the magnificent Gospel of sacrifice enunciated by Mahatma Gandhi, in which he vainly strove to teach us the heroic secret of national self-redemption. But we, so long disinherited from the epic faith that sustained our brave forefathers, were too weak and unworthy to respond for more than a brief period to the demands of that noble and exacting creed. Whatever may be the verdict of history, it cannot be gainsaid that the movement of non-violent non-co-operation that swept like a tempest over the country shook the very foundations of our national life, and though to-day it is quiescent and its echoes are almost still, it has irrevocably changed the aspect of our spiritual landscape.

"However remote may be all our programmes for the future from the principles and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, they must inevitably be permeated by the influence of these recent years which have permanently shifted the current of our political thought and altered the direction of our political destiny.

"We need to-day some transcendent miracle of intrepid and enduring statesmanship to enable us to remobilize, reconcile and discipline our scattered and demoralised energies to a supreme unanimous effort for the final deliverance of India from the last shackles of her political subjection; and to devise a comprehensive scheme that shall act as a natural and indispensable auxiliary of political emancipation, and include within the scope of its interest or benediction all the enterprises and endeavours that substantially contribute to the social, economic, industrial and intellectual advancement of India, consistently with the requirements of her own peculiar conditions and in accordance with the finest ideals of modern progress.

Village Reconstruction.

"To give concrete expression to our decisions in regard to these ancillary activities, the Indian National Congress should create definite departments to be governed by groups of men and women specially qualified by their capacity or enthusiasm to administer to the vital and divergent wants of the people. The main divisions might be few but should include within their

sphere of responsibility all cognate matters. To my mind it is of paramount importance to formulate a practical scheme of village reconstruction on the lines of Deshbandhu Das's dream. For this purpose we must try to enlist a large band of missionary patriots of burning zeal who, set free from material wants by the pious charity of the householders of the country as in ancient times, should carry through the length and breadth of the land the beneficent evangel of self-reliance and self-respect, taking the immemorial twin symbols of the plough and the spinning wheel as the central text of the teaching that shall liberate our unhappy peasantry from the crushing misery and terror of hunger, ignorance and disease. Closely allied to the task of village reorganisation is the task of organising the industrial workers in the crowded cities, who are so often compelled to live under conditions that degrade and brutalize them; and who, dislocated from the steady influences of the familiar traditions and associations of the rural homes they leave in search for bread, are so hopelessly exposed to the temptations of immorality and vice. It should be our endeavour to assist in securing for them improved housing conditions, better wages and a cleaner atmosphere, and to establish an equitable and harmonious co-operation between Capital and Labour as a valuable joint asset of national progress.

The Education Problem.

"I am appalled at the criminal apathy of our general attitude towards the urgent problem of Indian education. The surpassing evil of foreign domination has been to enslave our imagination and intellect and alienate us from the glorious tradition of our national learning. We are to-day no more than the futile puppets of an artificial and imitative system of education which, entirely unsuited to the special trend of our racial genius, has robbed us of our proper mental values and perspectives, and deprived us of all true initiative and originality in seeking authentic modes of self-expression. It is pre-eminently our duty towards the young generation to so recreate our educational ideals as to combine in felicitous, and fruitful alliance, all the lovely regenerating wisdom of our Eastern culture with all the highest knowledge of art and science, philosophy and civic organisation evolved by the younger peoples of the West.

National Militia.

"In addition, I would insist with all the force at my command on including a complete course of military training as an integral part of national education. Is it not the saddest of all sameful ironies that our children whose favourite lullabies are the battle songs of Kurukshetra and whose little feet march gaily to the stirring music of Rajput ballads, should be condemned to depend for the safety of their homes, the protection of their sanctuaries, the security of their mountain and ocean frontiers, on the fidelity and strength of foreign arms. The savage Massai, the primitive Zulu, the Arab and the Afridi the Greek and the Bulgar may all carry their tribal weapons and claim their inalienable right to defend the honour of their race, but we, whose boast it is that we kindled the flame of the world's civilization, are alone defrauded of our privilege and have become cowards by compulsion, unfit to answer the world's challenge to our manhood, unable to maintain the sanctity of our homes and shrines.

"Whatever the experiments recommended by the Commission now sitting to explore the avenues of military advancement for our people, it is incumbent

upon the Congress to form forthwith a national militia by volunteer conscription, of which the nucleus might well be the existing volunteer organisations. Further, we should also carefully consider the question of nautical as well as naval and aerial training to equip the nation for all purposes of defence against invasion or attack.

South-African Question

"Let it not be said of us, however, that our selfish absorption in our own domestic affairs has made us oblivious to the distress and difficulty of our kinsmen in foreign lands. Our adventurous compatriots, who have crossed the seas to seek their livelihood in the dominions and colonies have from time to time been subjected to restrictive and repressive legislation. The White Paper still stands as a reproach against our failure to redress the wrongs of Indian community in Kenya. But in the whole chronicle of civilized legislation there has never been so cruel and relentless an outrage against humanity as is deliberately embodied in the anti-Asiatic Bill, which is calculated to exterminate the Indian community from South Africa.

"Shall we not send across the seas a loving and ready response to their heart-rending cry for succour, and, through their ambassadors whom we welcome to-day, offer to our harassed and afflicted brothers in South Africa the assurance that India stands behind their courageous struggle to vindicate their inherent civic and human rights against the onslaught of such terrific injustice and oppression ?

An Overseas Department

"Never before has duty to our kindred in foreign countries been so vividly brought home to our minds ; nor the necessity of establishing a close and living contact with all their changing fortunes. We should not lose a single moment in forcing an Overseas Department in the Congress manned by those who can keep themselves vigilantly aware of all the legislations and enactments that adversely or otherwise affect Indian settlers abroad.

"Here my heart pleads with me to remember those sorrowful and lonely exiles, pining in strange and far-off corners of the earth, consumed with a desperate hunger and nostalgia for a glimpse of their motherland, to which they cannot return because, once they sought to serve her and win her freedom in ways unrecognised by the common law. But many amongst them surely have made fullest atonement for all the fervent folly of their too impatient youth. Surely they, who have been chastened in the searching crucibles of dreadful suffering and privation have been refashioned to become consecrated vessels of selfless service for the amelioration of the poor, the fallen, and the depressed.

Foreign Propaganda

"I cannot conceive how we have allowed ourselves to be so heavily handicapped by the lack of an efficient publicity which is the first essential of any campaign. We should therefore take immediate steps to form a department for widespread political propaganda and for the education of the masses in all matters pertaining to their civic and social interests, to the wrongs under which they labour, the struggles in which the nation is engaged, the iniquitous and unattractive fiscal and financial policies so ruinous to the prosperity of the country. I am confident that we could secure the willing co-operation of those who, otherwise prevented from active participation in public affairs, would gladly place their expert knowledge at our disposal, to advise us on

questions connected with the revival of cottage industries, on commerce, railway shipping, co-operative banking, and all other branches of development necessary for our material welfare.

"The nationalist press, both vernacular and English, should be amongst the accredited channels of our propaganda; above all a reliable foreign news service should be established to transmit to all the chief centres of the world the correct version of Indian affairs, and friendly embassies appointed to foster feelings of goodwill and understanding between India and the people of other lands.

Hindu-Moslem Question

"And now I approach with the utmost hesitation and regret the most baffling and most tragic of all the problems before us. I, who have dedicated my life to the dream of Hindu-Muslim unity, cannot contemplate without tears of blood the dissensions and divisions between us that rend the very fabric of my hope. I have tried to arrive at a just appreciation of the many unfortunate causes that have brought about so deep a gulf between the two communities, and tended to quicken such a sharp and importunate sense of aloofness on the part of my Muslim brothers, which, to the profound alarm and resentment of the Hindu community, manifests itself in a growing and insistent demand for separate and preferential rights and privileges in academic, official, civic and political circles of life. Though I am convinced that the principle of communal representation, whether through a joint or a separate electorate frustrates the conception of national solidarity, I am compelled to recognise that situated as we are to-day in an atmosphere so tense and dark and bitter with unreasoning communal jealousy, suspicion, fear, distrust and hatred, it is not possible to reach any satisfactory or abiding readjustment without the most earnest and patient collaboration between Hindu and Muslim statesmen of undeniable patriotism to whom we should entrust the delicate and difficult task of seeing some sovereign remedy for so devastating a disease.

"I beseech my Hindu brothers to rise to the height of their traditional tolerance which is the basic glory of our Vedic faith and try to comprehend how intense and far-reaching a reality is the brotherhood of Islam, which constrains seventy millions of Indian Mussalmans to share with breathless misery the misfortunes that are so swiftly overtaking the Islamic countries and crushing them under the heel of the military despotism of foreign power.

"In their turn I would implore my Muslim comrades not to permit their pre-occupation with the sorrows of Syria, Egypt, Iraq and Arabia to obliterate the consciousness of their supreme duty to India, their motherland, which must always have the first claim upon their devotion and allegiance.

"If Hindus and Mussalmans would both learn to practise the divine qualities of mutual forbearance and accord to one another perfect liberty of living, without the tyranny of fanatical interruptions of one another's appointed rituals and sacrifices, if they would but learn to reverence the beauty of each other's creeds and the splendour of each other's civilizations, if the women of the two communities would but join together in the intimate friendship of their common sisterhood, and nurture their children in an atmosphere of mutual sweetness and harmony, how near we should come to the fulfilment of our heart's desire!

The States and Frontier

"We should grossly fail in our duty to our neighbours were we to omit to try and foster cordial ties of sympathy and trust between ourselves and the princes and the people of the great Indian States scrupulously refraining from all interference in their internal concerns but always ready to serve in their wider interests.

"Nor can we afford to ignore the claims of the Frontier Provinces, which owing to their peculiar geographical and strategic position on the map, are governed by a form of perpetual martial law. We should render them all the assistance in our power, in their efforts to obtain the normal civic and social amenities which are so abundantly enjoyed by their sister provinces.

Our Common Goal

"These are some of the accessory features of our work. The real function however of the Indian National Congress is the speedy attainment of Swaraj.

There is a large and influential section of Congressmen who still cling with touching and jealous loyalty to the orthodox creed of Non-co-operation. Sternly refusing to take cognizance of Legislative bodies they devote themselves to the pursuit of Mahatma Gandhi's benevolent mission, propagating the cult of the spinning wheel and ministering to the lowly and pitiful outcasts of our society whom, in our arrogance, we have so long deprived of their elementary human rights.

"To-day therefore, the Swaraj Party with its highly disciplined organisation and its striking record of success is the only political body within the Congress engaged in actual combat with bureaucratic authority. Is it not in this crucial hour the unmistakable duty of all the other political parties in the country, irrespective of their particular labels and particular beliefs to return to the Congress, which invites them with open doors, and coalesce all their divided energies and talents in devising a common programme of action in pursuance of common goal.

"All of them have openly acknowledged that the Reforms of 1919 which were to have created a new era of progress have proved nothing but a mirage and the powers they professed to transfer to the people nothing but a deceptive myth. All of them surely, are tacitly agreed upon some common maximum of the wrongs they are still prepared to endure, some common minimum of the rights they are now determined to enforce. And whatever be my own personal conviction, they at all events are all in favour at least as an initial form of self-government, of the ideal of Dominion Status, so elaborately expounded in the Commonwealth of India Bill, and more succinctly and emphatically embodied in the National Demand which has been endorsed by the representatives of all political schools in the Legislative Assembly. Below the limits of that demand the Indian nation cannot descend without irretrievable damage to its dignity and self-respect. It is now for the Government to make the responsive gesture that shall decide our future attitude. If the response be sincere and magnanimous, with ample guarantees of good-will and good faith on its part, it will necessitate an immediate revision of our present policy. But if by the end of the Spring Sessions we receive no answer or an answer that evades the real issues, or proves unworthy of our acceptance, the National Congress must clearly issue a mandate to all those who come within its sphere to vacate their seats in the Central and Provincial Legislatures and inaugurate from Kailas to

Kanyakumari, from the Indus to the Brahmaputra an untiring and dynamic campaign to arouse, consolidate, educate and prepare the Indian people for all the progressive and ultimate stage of our united struggle and teach them that no sacrifice is too heavy, no suffering too great, no martyrdom too terrible, that enables us to redeem our Mother from the unspeakable dishonour of her bondage, and bequeath to our children an imperishable legacy of Peace.

"In the battle for liberty, fear is the one unforgivable treachery and despair, the one unforgivable sin.

"With palms uplifted in ardent supplication, I pray that, to us, in our coming hour of travail, may be granted in sufficient measure an invincible faith and an inflexible courage, and that he in whose name, we begin our labours to-day will in the hour of our triumph keep us humble and in the beautiful words of our ancient invocation,

"Lead us out of the Unreal into the Real,

"Out of the Darkness into the Light,

"Out of Death into Immortality".

Proceedings and Resolutions.

1.—The Condolence Resolution.

After the Presidential Address Mrs. Naidu moved from the chair a resolution mourning the death of the departed leaders, which was passed, all standing.

2.—The South African Indians.

Mahatma Gandhi then moved the following resolution about South African Indians in the form passed by the Congress Subjects Committee.

"The Congress extends its cordial welcome to the South African Indian Congress Deputation and assures the Indian settlers of South Africa of its full support in their struggle against the consolidated forces which threaten their very existence in that sub-continent.

"This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the proposed legislation known as the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill is in breach of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1911, in that it is racial in character and is calculated not only to make the position of settlers much worse than it was in 1914, but is designed to make residence in that country of any self-respecting Indian impossible.

"In the opinion of the Congress if the interpretation of the said agreement as put upon it on behalf of the settlers is not accepted by the Union Government, it should be decided by reference to arbitration, as was done in 1893 in connection with matters affecting the Indian settlers of the Transvaal, and in matters arising from the administration of Law 3 of 1895.

"The Congress heartily endorses the suggestion that a Round Table Conference, containing, among others, proper Indian representatives, should be called to settle the question, and trusts that the Union Government will accept that reasonable suggestion.

"In the event of the proposal of a Round Table Conference and the proposal regarding arbitration failing, the Congress is of opinion that the Imperial Government should withhold Royal Assent to the Bill should it pass through the Union Parliament.

In moving the above resolution Mahatma Gandhi delivered the following speech :—

"This is the resolution which I have not only the greatest pleasure in submitting to you for approval, but I consider it a rare privilege that I am authorised by Sarojini Devi to place this before you. She has introduced me to you as a South African. She might have added "By adoption, though born in India." I was adopted there and you will discover that when Dr. Rahaman, the leader of the deputation, to which you will extend your cordial welcome, will tell you that Indians of South Africa claim that they have given me to you. I accept that claim. It is perfectly true that whatever service I have been able to render—it may be disservice—to India, it is because I come from South Africa. If it is disservice it is not their fault; it is my limitation. Therefore, the evidence that I propose to give before you in support of the statement made here is that the Bill which is hanging like the Sword of Damocles over the heads of our countrymen in South Africa, is designed not merely to heap greater wrongs upon their heads, but virtually to expel them from South Africa.

Indians' Feeling

"Such is admittedly the meaning of the Bill. It is admitted by the Europeans of South Africa. It is not denied by the Union Government itself. If such is the result, you can imagine how keenly the Indians in South Africa must feel. Imagine for one moment that the Expulsion Bill is to be passed in the next session of the Assembly, expelling one hundred thousand Indians from India. What should we do or how should we behave under such a crisis? It is under such circumstances that you have the deputation in your midst. The deputation comes here for support from the people of India, from the Viceroy, the Government of India and through it the Imperial Government itself.

"Lord Reading has given them a long reply, and I wish I could have said also a satisfactory reply. The reply His Excellency has given is as unsatisfactory as it is long, and if that was all the efforts Lord Reading proposed to give to the members of the deputation he could have said that in a few words and spared them and spare this land the humiliating spectacle of a great Government confessing its inability to render proper redress to those who for no fault of their own, who, as many South African Europeans would admit, for their very virtues, are now in danger of being expelled from South Africa. To some of them South Africa is a land of their birth. It was no comfort to those friends of our, it was no comfort to us to be told that the Indian Government has always reserved to itself the right to make representation to the South African Government—the right of petitioning—that is to say by a mighty Government, a Government which is supposed to hold the destiny of 300 millions of people in the hollow of its hands. That Government confesses its powerlessness. And why, because South Africa enjoys Dominion Status.

Domestic Policy

"Lord Reading has told the deputation that the Indian Government or the Imperial Government cannot interfere with the domestic policy of a colony enjoying Dominion Status. What is the meaning of "domestic policy" when that policy is calculated to bring ruin upon the homes of thousands of Indian settlers domiciled there whom they deny the common rights of

humanity? Well, what would be the case if instead of Indians they happened to be Europeans or Englishmen?

"Let me quote a precedent. Do you know why the great Boer War took place? It took place in order to protect the Europeans of South Africa who were domiciled there, or "uplanders," as they were described by the Transvaal Republican Government. The late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain claimed for the British Government that even if the Transvaal was an independent Government he declined to believe that this was purely a domestic policy, or domestic question. He claimed to protect the rights of the "Uplanders" of Transvaal, and that was why the great Boer War took place.

Where are the Declarations?

"Lord Lansdowne said that it made his blood boil when he thought of the disabilities of Indians in Transvaal. He held that one of the potent causes of the Boer War was the disabilities of Indians in South Africa, or more accurately Indians of the Transvaal. Where are the declarations to-day? Why does not the British Government go to a war against the Union Government when the life, honour and livelihood of 150 thousand Indians are at stake?

"No body questions the description I have given. No body questions the ever growing grievances of the British Indians in South Africa. If you have seen a little pamphlet by Bishop Fisher who had been to South Africa you will find that there he gives a summary of the wrongs that are going to be heaped upon the South African Indians. The Bishop has come to the impartial conclusion that for these wrongs the Indians are not to blame. It is the Europeans; it is the jealous European traders; it is the insolence of the European power that is responsible for these wrongs. He gives his testimony that Indians deserved better at the hands of Europeans of South Africa.

"If justice can possibly eradicate this wrong, if admission by South African European statesmen could eradicate the wrongs, if right rules this world—for South Africa it will be impossible to bring about this Bill and it will not be necessary for me to waste your precious time and the time of the deputation and waste the money of the poor people of South Africa.

Thrifty Indians

"But no! Might is right. The Europeans of South Africa have chosen to heap these wrongs upon our countrymen, and for what purpose? Conflict of the two civilisations, as General Smuts said. He cannot put up with that and he thinks Europeans of South Africa consider that they will be overwhelmed by the East if they allow these hordes to pour down to South Africa from India. But how could we corrupt their civilisation? Is it because we are not ashamed to hawk vegetables and fruits and bring to the very doors of the South African farmers? This is the conflict.

"Someone has said (I do not know where, but only recently) that Europeans in South Africa dread the advent of Islam that civilised Spain, that took the torch of light to Africa and preached to the world the Gospel of Brotherhood, they are afraid that the natives of South Africa are embracing Islam. If brotherhood is a sin, if it is equality of coloured races that they dread, then that dread is well founded. The thing is they want to become lords of the universe. They want to appropriate the land for themselves. The Kaiser, though down-trodden, fears an Asiatic federation and speaks even from his haunt that it is a danger which Europeans should

guard themselves against. That is the conflict of civilisations and that is why Lord Reading is power-less to intervene in their domestic policy.

Unequal Struggle

"Such are the tremendous consequences of the struggle which this resolution describes as unequal, and it is in that unequal struggle that this Congress is called upon to be privileged to take its due share. I want to make an appeal, if my voice can go as far as South Africa, to the statesmen that are ruling the destiny of the South African Indians.

"I have so far given only the dark side of South African Europeans. Let me also say that I claim among them some of my most precious friends and I have received from individual South African Europeans the greatest kindness and greatest hospitality. I claim also to know General Smuts, though I may not claim to be his friend. He was a party to the agreement on behalf of his Government. He it was who said that the British Indians in South Africa deserved this settlement. It was he who said that this was a final settlement and that Indians should not threaten passive resistance and that the European settlers in South Africa should allow rest to the Indian community.

Broken Pledges

"But hardly had I turned my back from South Africa than a series of wrongs began to be heaped upon them. Where is the plighted word of General Smuts? General Smuts will go one of these days the same way that every human being has to tread, but his words and deeds shall remain after him. He is not a mere individual. He spoke the right thing in his representative capacity. He claims to be a Christian and every one of the members of the South African Government is Christian. They claim to be Christians. Before they open their Parliament they read out the common prayer from the Bible and a South African Divine opens the proceedings with a prayer that goes up to God, not of white men, not of the Negro, not of the Mussalman, not of the Hindu, but the God of all.

"I say this from my place of position, and knowing my responsibility to its fullest extent, that they deny their Bible, they deny their God, if they hesitate for one moment, if they fail to render the elementary justice that is due to the Indians of South Africa".

Maulana MOHAMED ALI deplored that it was because the nation had not taken to the spinning wheel and had on the other hand established many war fronts in the form of fights between Hindus and Muslims, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, No-changers and Swarajists, and now the latest between Swarajists and Responsive Co-operators that they were feeling helpless in helping their brothers in South Africa. Was it not a shame that one among every four of Indians was untouchable? He, however, felt that Mahatma Gandhi had introduced a new force—the readiness to die—with which they could defy the most mighty. The speaker offered himself for service in South Africa any time that his life was required.

Mr. KARANDIKAR, ex-member of the Council of State, in supporting the resolution said some time ago this question was discussed in the Council of State. He became aware of the attitude of the Government that it was anxious to do all that was possible, but in the end it turned out to be nothing more than impotent rage. He asked the Government of India

to do its duty in ameliorating the conditions of Indians in South Africa, for it was the Government of India, who under pressure from the Home Government, sent them there to develop that land.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously amidst acclamation.

Dr. Abdur RAHAMAN then came to the rostrum to acknowledge thankfully the resolution passed, which he said was the first thing since their arrival in India that had inspired them with a little hope for the future (Applause.) He had no doubt that if only they could get Mahatmaji to put their case before the Indian people there would be no difficulty in getting the Indian nation to stand by the sons of India in their sufferings in South Africa.

The Union Government's Bill intended that the Indian community be either exterminated or hounded out. "The majority of us in South Africa are not going to give in. (Hear. hear.) We feel we are fighting your battle; when a wound is inflicted on us we feel it has been inflicted on our Motherland—the Great Indian Empire.

As Mahatmaji has said, we are disappointed with the Viceroy's reply. He said that we could not interfere with domestic legislation of South Africa. Why is it domestic? We are fortunately or unfortunately a part of the British Empire, and it is because we are a part of the Empire that the Government of India is impotent and helpless. (Shame.) If the British Empire only means exploitation of non-European races, if it stands only for letting Europeans exploit the weak, the sooner the Empire is done with the better it is for the world." (Applause).

He asked those in the Councils that if the Government of India failed to assist them, they should put the South African issue in their elections and throw out all Bills. "Do not sanction a farthing and hold up all government machineries until we who are treated as political helots and are held in industrial serfdom, are treated honourably." (Applause).

Dr. Abdur Rahaman pleaded that they should let Mahatma Gandhi go to South Africa just for a few months and all their troubles would be over. Mahatma Gandhi did not look ill. The longer he spoke the stronger his voice grew. Mahatmaji knew their difficulties. Either their shops were stopped, or they had no schools to give education to their children or to learn skilled trade. The law of the land prohibited them from being so employed. (Cries of shame.) If only Mahatmaji could go with them, all troubles would vanish, just as snow melted before the morning sun.

They must have discovered again and again that they were suffering because they were members of the British Empire. "If you had some battleships to-day, if you had your army, a little handful of the so-called whites, who were vomitted forth on the shores of Africa from the slums of Europe, would not have dared do what they are doing to-day. No Englishman would be let to suffer these conditions for 24 hours.

We are going through the country. I have told the Viceroy that we are going to ask the people of India to back him up. The Viceroy must tell Great Britain that she must exercise the power reserved under Section 65 of the South Africa Act, that if they don't give us a Round Table Conference, then the British Government should veto that Bill, and if the British Government does not use it, then it will show that they have tricked us, that they

have betrayed us, because they put that Section into the Act, and they refuse to use it. We are your soldiers. We are not beaten. We are not going to give in. It is your duty to say : Go on boys ; fight on in South Africa ; we will stand by you ; we will support you in every way. Then we will go on and maintain the honour of the great Indian Empire. (Loud Applause).

The Congress then rose for the day and adjourned till 12 noon the next day.

SECOND DAY—27TH DECEMBER 1925

The Congress reassembled at 1-30 p.m. Attendance was as large as yesterday, as the agenda on this day contained the central resolution of the session regarding the political programme of the Swarajya Party as finally approved of by the Congress Subjects Committee on the previous day. Other resolutions condemned Government's action under the Bengal Ordinance, demanded unconditional release of Sikh prisoners, urged the Viceroy to withhold sanction to the Expulsion of Non-Burman Offender's Bill and Tax on the Sea Passenger's Bill. Pandit Malaviya attended on this day.

3.—The Bengal Ordinance Condemned.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta moved :—

" This Congress strongly condemns the abuse of Regulation III of 1818 and the autocratic enactment of the Bengal Ordinance Act and the arrest and detention without definite charge and open trial of a large number of patriotic youngmen of Bengal under the said Regulation and the Act and further condemns their continued incarceration, maltreatment and deportation outside Bengal notwithstanding the clearly and repeatedly expressed opinion of the people both inside and outside the legislatures."

Mr. Sen Gupta said Government had broken its pledge given in a Government Resolution on the Repressive Laws Committee's Report to repeal Regulation III of 1818. On the other hand the Bengal Ordinance was secretly hatched and 150 persons were arrested for conspiracy, but not a single document or ammunition of an incriminating nature was discovered. The Ordinance itself was so framed that to silence some critics it was provided that there would be trial by Special Magistrates. More than a year had, however, passed and the 150 patriots were kept in jail without trial and without any charge against them. (Shame, shame). Government apologists had stated that witnesses and jury would be intimidated. This was a lie. One single European, Mr. Day, during the last five years has been killed and it was a jury with a majority of Indians that returned a verdict of guilty. Witnesses, all Indian, gave evidence in the case. Same was done in the case of a bomb thrown into a shop. The fact, however, was that Government had no proof which could stand the test of judicial scrutiny.

" My charge is that their object is not to punish criminal activity, but to smash the legitimate activities of the Swaraj Party and the Congress." (Applause). Mr. Sen Gupta charged the Bengal Government for violating the Ordinance by not providing comforts to the prisoners promised by the Act and held it unlawful on the part of Sir Hugh Stephenson to have stated that it was a part of the Burma Government's job and not the Bengal Government's to fix the allowance of detainees transferred to the Rangoon jails. He declared that the administration which stood in the way of the

forces of liberty would be demolished as similar institutions have been demolished in the past in other countries. (Applause).

Mr. M. R. Jayakar, seconding the resolution said the Ordinance was a disgrace upon any civilized Government, much more so on a Government which had in its own country produced the Common Law and the Law of Evidence to sift falsehood from truth. He did not know of any instance since 1908 when a prisoner killed a co-prisoner for perfidy or where a witness had been intimidated.

Mr. Shyamsunder Chakraverty held that mere passing of resolutions on the Bengal Ordinance every year showed only impotent rage.

After Dr. Satyapal and Mr. Purushottam Roy had spoken the resolution was passed unanimously.

4.—The Gurdwara Prisoners.

Lala Lajpat Rai moved :—

"This Congress deeply regrets that the Punjab Government has not yet released the Gurdwara prisoners in spite of the settlement brought about by the Gurdwara Act merely on the technical ground that the Gurdwara prisoners would not give an undertaking which high-souled prisoners declared to be derogatory to their self-respect. This Congress is of opinion that there will be no proper settlement of the Gurdwara questions until the Gurdwara prisoners are unconditionally released."

Lala Lajpat Rai said the Bengal Partition agitation and the Sikh Gurdwara agitation stood before them as outstanding examples of what a determination to win a right cause could achieve. The Sikhs were determined and made the life of the Government most inconvenient and they had their way. The Government paid no heed to mere bluff and threat. He was one of those who had previously advised the Sikhs to accept the condition, but when the Sikh prisoners had gone on better and had enrolled themselves as voters under the Act there is no basis for the Government to insist on its particular condition being fulfilled.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar held that it was nothing but a spirit of meanness that the Government was exhibiting in asking for an idle undertaking.

Maulana Shaukatali's advice to the Sikhs was that let all their leaders rot in jail but never to give an undertaking.

Pundit Nekiram said the Sikhs had won right through and the Government had now put the last hitch to keep up its prestige. But the Sikhs who had sent in thirty thousand men to jail, had suffered four hundred of them to death and had paid eleven lakhs to penalties, could not yield.

Qazi Abdur Rahiman and Mr. Barucha also supported.

Sardar Mangal Singh in thanking the Congress for the support said Sir Malcolm Hailey's Government would have to surrender. How were they saying that the country was not fit for Civil Disobedience, when hundreds of them in the Punjab who were members of unlawful bodies—the Akali Dal and the S. G. P. C. of which he was the President—were not being arrested? The Government dared not. When Mahatma Gandhi and Lala Lajpat Rai told them to accept the condition of the Punjab Government, Sikh leaders felt that it would involve national humiliation, if they did so after such sacrifice. He assured them that the Sikhs would be prepared for even greater sacrifices for national liberty but on one condition that the Hindus and the Muslims did not fight. It was, indeed, because of the Congress's

weakness that it took them two years to win their point at Jaito, because the Government thought that without the help of the Hindus and the Muslims the Sikhs could not hold on for long.

The resolution was passed.

5.—Non-Burman Offenders' Bill.

Mr. T. Prakasam then moved :—

"This Congress regards the expulsion of Non-Burman Offenders' Bill and the Tax on Sea Passengers' Bill of Burma to be an attack on the liberty of the citizens and in the opinion of the Congress the first Bill imperils the vast interests of Indians resident in Burma inasmuch as it exposes innocent men to the mercy of the Executive and is of opinion that the Bills should not receive Viceregal sanction".

Mr. Prakasam said he had recently been touring in Burma, closely studying the conditions there. The real object of the Expulsion Bill was the prevention of political propaganda among the Indians there. Schedules attached to the Bill included trivial offences like the failure to take out license for keeping wireless installation. If the Bill became law they would soon have a Kenya in the very heart of India. The Viceroy expressed his powerlessness to do anything substantial for the Indians in Kenya. But Burma was a part of India and the Bill was introduced with his previous permission. He could not plead now powerlessness.

Continuing Mr. Prakasam described in detail the effects of the Sea Passengers' Bill that proposed a tax of Rs. 5 on every Indian getting into boat for Burma from any part of India. It was the paramount duty of India to see that these two obnoxious Bills did not get into the Statute Book. Concluding Mr. Prakasam said the Burmans themselves did not give their approval to these two Bills. Even the Nationalists who were originally responsible for the passing of them had come to realise their mistake. Mr. Prakasam hoped that the Indian M.L.C.s in the Burma Council would co-operate with the Swarajists and the Home Rulers and get these Bills revoked. Mr. Prakasam also put in a strong plea for the regulation of the emigration of labour from India to Burma and Ceylon. India was fast becoming, said Mr. Prakasam, a labour depot. Was it not our duty, he asked, to see that labourers who went out were not subjected to ill-treatment?

Mr. HALDER seconding said there was no organised movement to support our resolutions. The trouble in Burma was the same as the trouble in South Africa. Everything was a question of bread and butter, especially so in the country of virgin soil. The mighty Europeans who were exploiting the Indians must be attacked on their weak spot. The speaker asked, would there be an organised movement from India which would go to Burma and vindicate our rights there? This could be done by the peaceful weapon of the Akalis.

Sj. N. C. BANERJEE, ex-editor of the "Rangoon Mail", deplored that the Indians here had not realised the danger that threatened the Indians in Burma. After the qualified Home Rule given to Burma the cry of 'Burma for the Burmans' had been raised to the detriment of the Indians and the Burmans and in the real interests of the British exploiters. The Burmans were opposed to the Bills but the leaders of such, Burmans were in jail. Sir Harcourt Butler, very courteous but very astute, had managed to

divide the Burmans from the Indians. It was for the Viceroy to remedy the injustice and danger proposed by the Bills.

Mr. Abdul Sattar WALI (Burman) supported the resolution, The Bills referred to were clearly directed against the Indians because they constituted the majority of the Non-Burman foreign element in Burma.

Mr. MADANJIT (Burma) appealed to the Indians here to come to the rescue of the one million of the Indians in Burma who could not peacefully breathe there if the proposed legislation were not vetoed by Lord Reading. The Indian Congress was taking interest in the position of the Indians in South Africa, of those in Fiji and Kenya, but not of those in Burma.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

6.—The Franchise Question.

Dr. SATYAPAL in place of Mahatma Gandhi moved the resolution approving and confirming part I of resolution passed by the A. I. C. C. at Patna regarding the alternative Franchise and creating the All-India Spinner's Association. He made a long speech explaining the importance of Khaddar.

Mr. C. Venkatramana IYENGAR, though he possessed shares in Mills, supported the resolution as he believed there was at present no antagonism between the mill industry and the Khaddar industry. If the manufacture of hand-spun yarn was increased there would be great possibility of reducing the import of foreign cloth and foreign yarn. Mills in India could not completely clothe us and there would always be demand for Khaddar and if the quality and quantity of Khaddar was improved it would be all the better.

Moulana Hasrat MOHANI opposing the resolution objected to the insistence of Khaddar dress for Congress work although he believed in the utility of wearing Khaddar. To be a member of the Congress was the right of every Indian and to deprive him of it on the ground that he did not put on Khaddar was nothing short of coercion. He wondered if the Congress would appreciate the resolution that those who were not vegetarians should not be entitled to exercise their Congress membership rights. It was argued that there must be a National Uniform but what was the need for it. By these sartorial requirement the Congress was shutting out persons like Mr. Jinnah, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Chintamani who were not opposed to the Congress nor to Khaddar. Maulana Hasrat Mohani had a suspicion that the Congress workers did not always put on Khaddar. At best each could have but one pair of Khaddar cloth to put on on Congress occasions and yet why have the compulsion and disqualification in case of not wearing Khaddar?

Maulana MOHAMED ALI complained that what India possessed was not intelligentsia but unintelligentsia, for if they really had intelligentsia the country could never have remained for so long in the occupation of a handful of Englishmen. Mr. Hasrat Mohani had opposed the resolution on the ground of his dislike of conscription. The speaker asked whether it was not a fact that during the last war when voluntary recruitment did not come up to the standard, conscription was a necessity. The speaker emphasised that what India needed was not protection to transfer 70 crores from the pockets of

Manchester to those of Bombay, but a machinery for the proper distribution of wealth so that these 70 crores might be distributed among twenty crores of poor "Kisans." They jeered at Mahatma Gandhi's prescription for liberty, perhaps because it was so cheap. He asked them to remember that Napoleon used to say that every army was a reptile. It marched on its bellies. It was, therefore, important to feed the bellies in India. Crores of people did not fill their bellies by two meals a day and until they did that India would be unfit for liberty. The same was true regarding the "untouchables." "If you do not remove untouchability and ask for liberty, you are fools and you pretend to be philosophers."

The resolution moved by Dr. Satyapal was then put to vote and carried, only a few voting with Hasrat Mohani.

American's Tribute to Mahatmaji.

Mrs. Naidu then introduced Professor Holmes of U.S.A. whom she described as the American Ambassador who had come to tell them that America was looking to India to get her freedom as speedily as possible. (Applause).

As Professor HOLMES rose from the dais towards the rostrum, dressed in English clothes and wearing a white Gandhi cap, he was cheered. He said he could not claim in an official way to represent America. He belonged to the Society of Friends known as Quakers and was a member of the Federation of Labour. He could unofficially claim to speak for his Society and labourers and in those two capacities he was there to express sympathy and interest of the American people for the service of humanity as well of India that the Congress had undertaken and especially American affection and loyalty for the great leader who had risen among them. (Applause). "Yesterday I heard Dr. Abdur Rahman claiming Mr. Gandhi as a South African. May I not to-day claim him for the world? (Applause). May I not say that the Society of Friends which I represent regard him with the same reverence and believe in his work as you do? (Hear, Hear). I ought to say that we people have been very far wrong in our western civilization. We have gone too far in the pursuit of wealth and power. It is a deep evil in our whole western civilization. Our love of wealth has resulted in the concentration of wealth among some and has caused labour troubles. Our longing to the west for power has brought on war after war and seems likely to plunge into still further war until perhaps it destroys our civilization. So we gladly turn to you who are indicating another and better way and we hope that while keeping good things in our civilization regarding the power over nature and inventions we should follow the brotherly spirit which is represented by the great prophet among you (applause)."

"It would be presumptuous for me to say anything about the problems before you but let me say that no one brought up in U.S.A., however he or she might have gone wrong, can fail to be touched and thrilled by every movement for human freedom and for the liberty of the people of the world (applause).

7.—The Political Programme

At 5-45 p.m. Pandit Motilal rose amidst cheers to move the main

resolution of the session outlining the political programme. The following is the full text of the resolution as amended by the Subjects Committee.

"This Congress confirms Part B of the resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee, at the meeting held at Patna, on the 22nd and 23rd September last, and resolves that the Congress do now take up, and carry on, such political work as is necessary in the interest of the country and, for this purpose, do employ the whole of the machinery and funds of the Congress, save and except such funds and assets as, under that resolution, have been declared to belong to the All-India Spinners' Association, and such funds and assets as may be ear-marked.

"This Congress reiterates its faith in civil disobedience as the only effective weapon to be used, in the last resort, to enforce the national honour; but realizes that the country is not now ready for it; and in view thereof, this Congress resolves that the guiding principle, in carrying on all political work, shall be self-reliance in all activities which make for the healthy growth of the nation, and resistance to every governmental or other activity that may impede the nation's progress towards Swaraj; and this Congress adopts the following programme of political work:—

"(1) The work in the country shall be directed to the education of the people in their political rights and training them to acquire the necessary strength and power of resistance to win those rights by carrying out the constructive programme of the Congress, with special reference to popularising the spinning wheel and khaddar, promoting inter-communal unity, removal of untouchability, ameliorating the conditions of the suppressed classes and removal of the drink and drug evils; and shall include the organisation of villages, the capture of local bodies and the promotion of education on national lines and of labour, both industrial and agricultural, the adjustment of relations between employers and labour, and between landlords and tenants, and the general advancement of the national, economical, industrial and commercial interests of Indians, both in India and Overseas.

"(2) The work outside the country shall be directed to the dissemination of accurate information.

"(3) This Congress adopts the terms of the settlement offered by the Independent and Swarajya Parties of the Assembly on the 18th February, 1924, and incorporated in its resolution of the same date, as terms on behalf of the country, and, having regard to the fact that the Government have so far not made any response even to the said offer, the following further action shall be taken—

"(1) The Swarajya Party in the Assembly shall, at the earliest opportunity, invite the Government to give their final decision on the said demand, and in case no decision is announced before the end of February, or the decision announced is held not to be satisfactory by a special committee consisting of the Working Committee of the Congress and the members named below, the party shall by adopting the proper procedure, intimate to the Government on the floor of the House, that the party will no longer continue to remain and work in the present legislatures as heretofore, but will go into the country to work among the people. The Swarajist members of the Assembly and the Council of State will vote for the rejection of the Finance Bill and, immediately after, leave their seats. The Swarajist members of such Provincial Councils as may be in session at the time shall also leave their seats and report themselves to the Special Committee aforesaid, for further instructions. Swarajist members of such Councils as are not in session, at the time, shall not attend future meetings of the said Councils, and shall, likewise, report themselves to the Special Committee.

"(2) No member of the Swaraj Party in the Council of State, Legislative Assembly or any of the Provincial Councils shall thereafter attend any meeting of any of the said legislatures, or any of their committees, except for the purpose of preventing his seat from being declared vacant, provided that it shall be open to the special committee to allow the Swarajist members of any legislatures to attend the said legislatures when such attendance is, in its opinion, essential for some special or unforeseen purpose, and provided also that, prior to their being called upon to leave their seats, it shall be open to the Swarajist members of the various Legislatures, to engage themselves in such activities in their respective legislatures as permissible to them under the existing rules of the party; ,

"(3) The special committee shall immediately on receipt of the reports mentioned in Sub-clause (1), call a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee to frame a programme of work, which shall be carried out by the Congress and the Swaraj Party organisation in co-operation with each other throughout the country;

"(4) The said programme of work shall include selected heads of the general work mentioned in Clauses (1) and (2) above, as also the education of the electorates in the policy herein laid down, and shall indicate the lines on which the next general election is to be run by, and in the name of the Congress and state clearly the issues on which Congressmen shall seek election ;

"The Congress hereby authorises the Provincial Congress Committees to select candidates for the Provincial Legislative Councils and the Indian Legislative Assembly in their provincial areas for the general election next year, as early as possible, provided that the policy of non-acceptance of offices in the gift of the Government shall continue to be followed until a response to the terms of settlement aforesaid is made by the Government.

"(5) In the event of the final decision of the Government, on the terms of settlement of the Assembly, being found satisfactory and acceptable by the aforesaid Special Committee, a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee shall forthwith be held to determine the future course of action.

"(6) Until the Swarajists leave the legislatures, as herein provided, the constitution of the Swaraj Party and the rules made thereunder shall be followed in the legislatures, subject to such changes as may be made by the Congress or the All-India Congress Committee, from time to time ;

"(7) For the purpose of starting the work under Sub-clauses (3) and (4), the All-India Congress Committee shall allot such funds as it may consider sufficient for the initial expenses of the necessary propaganda in that behalf ; but any further funds required for the said purpose shall be raised by the Working Committee or, under its directions by contributions from the public."

Pt. Matilal spoke for little less than an hour in Hindi mainly explaining the provisions of his long resolution for the information of the delegates who had not been yet supplied with the Hindi version of it. He said he knew the resolution would be strenuously opposed by some. He would, therefore, reserve his arguments for the final reply, but he emphasised that since the Gaya Congress this was the first time that a resolution was moved representing the common demands of the two wings of the Congress. It had come before the Congress in the shape he was putting it forward after undergoing many alterations and after a stiff fight in the Swaraj Party Council and Congress Subjects Committee.

PANDIT MALAVIYA'S AMENDMENT

Pandit MALAVIYA then rose amidst cheers to move his amendment, which was supported by Mr. M. R. Jayakar. Pandit Malaviya's amendment proposed considerable alteration in the main resolution :—

Firstly, it omitted the para referring to Civil Disobedience.

Secondly, it amplified the Congress programme of political work, by including in it the following : "That the work in the legislatures shall be so carried on as to utilize them to the best possible advantage for early establishment of full responsible Government, co-operation being resorted to when it may be necessary to advance the national cause and obstruction when that may be necessary for the advancement of the same cause."

This suggestion, Pandit Malaviya said, embodied exactly what Lokamanya Tilak and Deshbandhu C. R. Das had stated in their speeches at the Amritsar Congress in 1919. Lokamanya Tilak had said : "We shall utilize the Reforms Act to the best possible advantage, and Mr. C. R. Das had said : "We shall co-operate when it may be necessary to advance the national cause, and shall obstruct when that may be necessary for the advancement of the same cause."

did from a land of religious mysticism. But for the wonderful co-operation and kindness shown to him it would not have been possible for him to hold the place of the President or to conduct the proceedings in the way in which he had conducted them. Such warm and whole-hearted co-operation he had from the delegates in full measure both in the Subjects Committee and in the open Congress. He was thankful to Pandit Malaviya for attending this session of the Congress. The very warm words in which he proposed the vote of thanks to the President really touched him and he, the speaker, wished he deserved all that had been said of him. He did not think he had acquitted himself in the same way as Srimati Sarojini Devi, the poetess and eloquent orator, had acquitted herself in the previous year, for he was only a prosaic Tamilian. But he was a business man and so during those two days they were able to pass business resolutions. His address, his friends informed him, was moderate. He was glad that they had taken the address in the spirit in which it was meant. His moderation consisted in allowing people to come together. The great difficulty among them all was that they misunderstood one another. He believed that the heart of every Indian was beating truly for Swaraj. Misunderstandings of various descriptions cropped up, linguistic, religious and personal. Those misunderstandings were exploited by the foreign bureaucracy. The fight among Indians commenced after a decision had been reached. It should be before the decision was arrived at. After coming to a decision every body should give effect to it and not disobey it. That was the request he would make to his friends assembled there.

He would now urge upon them to remember three or four things. The first feature of this year's Congress was that every one in India recognised that the revision of the constitution was impending and that was the main reason why everyone desired union. Nobody should make union impossible by lowering the quality of moderation. Let not any body imagine that others desired to hold different views for their personal ends. Those who believed that khaddar would lead to Swaraj misunderstood those who thought that Councils would be helpful. Similarly with regard to Hinduism and Mahomedanism. All those things should be kept in their proper place. If religious traditions were to be kept pure, they must occupy the high plane and must not be brought down to the realm of controversial politics. Religion must be dissociated from politics. Again, the curse of India was to start a compromise even at the beginning of a fight. Compromise could be thought of only after the fight had proceeded to a certain extent. The release of political prisoners was a condition precedent for the acceptance of office, but not the sole condition. If that was the sole condition, the Government would always put a number of people in jail. The release of political prisoners was an indispensable condition for honourable co-operation, but ought not to be the sole condition. The release of Bengal detainees must not be treated as a provincial matter but an All-India one. Every Province must be equally interested in the release of political prisoners. It was easy enough to say that they should work the constitution and lower the flag of revolt. That had been tried in the past and they found out that they had really strengthened the hands of the Bureaucracy. On the question of Hindu-Muslim unity he said that Hindu-Muslim differences should be composed by preaching constantly Hindu-Muslim unity. There must be a common programme in the working of which Hindus and Mussal-

mans should join. Then they would forget the difference. This year there would be a more serious attempt made to give effect to the Cawnpore constructive programme reiterated in Gauhati.

He congratulated the Congress on their passing the amendment relating to habitual wearing of Khaddar. Khaddar was really helpful to the attainment of Swaraj, but he did not attach as much importance to Khaddar as Mahatma Gandhi did. Without it, however, they could not get sufficient discipline. They should, therefore, spread the Khaddar movement more largely than they had ever done before. He also congratulated them on their passing the resolution on the Currency question which certainly required consideration. The Working Committee would deal with it in such a way as it thought fit.

In conclusion, he asked them to constantly dream of Swaraj. They should make Swaraj their religion till they got freedom for the country. It was not a matter for argument but of faith. If they imagined they would not get Swaraj and if they were diffident, that itself disentitled them to Swaraj. They should be confident of getting Swaraj. He did not agree with those who thought that Council work would be able to achieve nothing. It had captured the strategic positions which were necessary for the maintenance of the bureaucracy. Without work in the Council it would be impossible to do work in the country and vice versa. He was thankful that Mahatma Gandhi attended this session of the Congress and actively took part in it. He did not know whether Mahatma Gandhi would lead them once more if they contributed their share of the work, if they made Council programme and the programme of work in the country an efficient and businesslike programme. Mahatma Gandhi with his capacity for adjustability and with his business ability would certainly come and lead them. Council members should take interest in the constructive programme and Congress members outside the Council should take interest in the Council programme. This session of the Congress had witnessed such fusion of parties. The Independent Congress Party, led by Pandit Malaviya, was visibly fusing itself with the Swarajists. He had not the slightest doubt that Pandit Motilal Nehru and Pandit Malaviya would be able to give battle to the Bureaucracy in a better way than they had been able to give within the last three years. He did not think that in the local Councils the prospects were gloomy at all. Non-acceptance of office by Swarajists would solve many problems. To his mind Khaddar, Councils and the volunteer movement would help them in winning Swaraj. He appealed to them to give all possible support to the movement that they could (cheers).

The Congress was then dissolved.

NINTH SESSION OF THE National Liberal Federation

AKOLA—THE 27TH DECEMBER 1926.

The ninth session of the National Liberal Federation commenced at Akola on the 27th Dec. under the presidency of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar. There were about 400 persons present in the pandal including delegates from several provinces and visitors and a number of ladies. Prominent among the delegates present were Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Mr. Jatindra Nath Basu and Mr. Sudhansu Mohan Bose of Calcutta, Pandits Hridaynath Kunzru and V. M. Tewari, and Mr. Krishna Rao Mehta from the United Provinces, M. Hridaydutt Sharma from the Punjab, Mr. Swaminarayan Shahu from Bihar, Messrs. G. K. Devadhar, J. R. Gharpure, N. M. Joshi and V. K. Mainkar from Bombay, Messrs. S. G. Vaze, D. V. Ambekar, Mr. and Mrs. Gadgil, Rao Bahadur Kale, Mr. K. S. Jathar from Poona, Rao Bahadur V. R. Pandit Jayabant Kelkar Bamvale from the Central Provinces, Rao Bahadur Mudle Brahma Khare, Mr. J. B. Deshmukh, Professor Bhanu and others from Berar.

The Welcome Address.

Rao Bahadur DAMLE, in his welcome address, made a lengthy review of events in political India since the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Rao Bahadur Damle, referring to the Sabarmati Pact, said :—

"In the first week of May, 1926, the compromise failed and the Swaraj and Responsivist parties remained the two militant parties in the Congress. The imperious mandates to walk out and walk in to the Congress members in the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils by the Swaraj executive committee and the literal execution of these mandates by the members so enjoined, lowered the Swaraj Party's activities in the public estimation and there is no knowing when the smouldering fire of disagreement may kindle into flames and destroy the apparent amity which is being kept up with great efforts in the working of the Congress programme. One dominant result of the Swarajist tactics which has largely weaned public sympathy from them is the actual suspension of Reforms in Bengal from 13-6-25 to 21-1-27 and in the C. P. and Berar from 20-5-26 to 31-1-27. No manner of reasoning can satisfy an inquiring mind that the Swarajist methods appeal to the general public as calculated to serve the best and true interests of India.

The woes of the Liberals.

"During the period of trouble and anxiety as shown above, the Liberal party had an arduous task to perform. It had to raise its voice of vehement protest against the repressive measures of the Government, to vigorously expose it to true light and maintain the incongruity of the unworkable part

of the scheme of reforms and incessantly but fearlessly combat the futile dissemination of doctrines of non-co-operation, mass civil disobedience, boycott of Councils, Law Courts and Government educational institutions. The Government looked upon the Liberal party with distrust and perhaps with serious misgivings when it unsparingly condemned the Government measures of repression and infamous massacre of the innocent hundreds in the Punjab. The people in the country on the other hand called it by bad names, denounced it as a snake in the grass and as a band of traitors to the country. Foully deprecated and held up to wanton ridicule, the Liberal party was driven to a position which became intolerable. Deprived of all sense of respect for age, education, social standing and eminent public service students and crowds of people ingrained with rowdiness could freely mob public speakers on public platforms. What stormy scenes such high personages as Dr. Besant, the Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri and Sir Surendra Nath Bannerjee had to face during this period of public unrest and tense disaffection towards the Liberals is a matter well within our memory. This was primarily due to the fact that the cult of Gandhism as misinterpreted by the people reigned supreme all over India. The Liberal party withstood with fortitude and forbearance all the rebuffs, ridicule, calumny and misrepresentation, and patiently maintained its ground boldly, firmly and persistently, fully fortified as it was in its correct outlook of the situation by the strength of its convictions.

"Both wings of the Congress as it originally stood came to be distrusted and therefore unheeded by the Government. This was and is altogether an undesirable result. It is undeniable that all the political workers in India whether they are inside the Congress or outside, and whether they belong to some group or another, are animated with the same motive to do devoted service to their Motherland and are fired with the same righteous and noble sentiment of patriotic love for India. They have honestly been seeking out the surest way to carry forward the political status of India to the highest altitude attainable as early as possible. They are agreed also as to the practical limitations within which their activities have to be carried on. In this state of things each right-minded patriot has to place the true interest of his country above his self or party considerations. In the heart of his heart every sensible Indian cherishes and must cherish a rapid advance of his country to the destined goal namely, responsible Government or Swaraj. For an early realisation of this object a concentration of forces from all sides is required to be applied in the right direction. Any move or force which retards this onward march in the direction marked out has to be scrupulously avoided. The road is one and the same. It must be clear to everyone who has to use it, and he must vigilantly keep it in sight despite the elusive effects of a temporarily stormy atmosphere or foggy weather. Deviation from the right path means so much waste of energy and consequent delay in reaching the destination. Those who lose their path and in their stray wanderings ask their fellow workers to join their company require more guides to bring them back to the right path, and this necessarily entails delay. Perhaps it may amount to an act of immodesty or impertinence on my part—an humble co-worker in an obscure corner of the country devoting his attention to the study of politics—to go out of his limited groove and to criticise the value and propriety of the counsel which the widely acknowledged leaders of the non-co-operators and the Swarajists are deliberately giving to the country. That higher task of responsibility and superior authority I

must leave to abler and worthier hands. I shall, however, content myself with asserting my honest conviction that the activities of the Swarajists and non-co-operators in the country are proving a serious handicap to the smooth and orderly progress of the country along the right path."

Proceeding the Rao Bahadur said :—"The Government of India Act 1919 expressly prescribes a definite procedure for the determination of India's claim to a further and larger measure of responsible self-Government, and provides that the statutory commission as its accredited agent will investigate the merits of the claim and report its recommendations to the British Parliament for final determination. Can it be in any way possible for the Swarajists and non-co-operators to avoid the prescribed procedure? They are not in a position to deny the binding force of the Act. Much less can they question the authority of the British Parliament to determine the merits of the claim. India will be on her trial before the Royal Commission which will come out to India in 1929. If the Swarajists and non-co-operators who pose themselves as the real representatives of India purposely keep out and avoid ventilating their just grievances, who will suffer? Can they afford to treat so lightly this grave situation? Can they not cast aside their personal sense of displeasure or dislike and give up their attitude of wrecking or obstructing the reforms, for the sake of their country which they love so dearly and in advocating and furthering whose cause they are and ought to be prepared to make the largest personal sacrifice demanded of them? The claims of India will have to be presented before the Commission as strongly as possible with united will and purpose. Shall I be appealing in vain to my fellow countrymen when I imploringly beseech them to rise to the occasion to prove themselves to be the worthy and loyal sons of India and to work whole-heartedly, lovingly and unitedly to press India's claims on the attention of the Commission in the best and most effective manner? I feel confident that petty party quarrels and differences will not prevent them from the performance of their clear duty to their country. Shall I be fruitlessly invoking their goodwill and co-operation in the heavy and responsible task ahead of us which will require the full measure of energy and attention from the best and most capable brains in India, no matter what way their inclinations lie? The country's need transcends all personal difficulties and grievances. Let us then forget the past, forgive the ills and misunderstandings, forgive the wrongs, real or imagined, and sincerely join hands solely to throw our heart and might into our country's cause and win it easily and successfully with one mind and aim,"

Hindu-Muslim Unity.

Dealing next with the Hindu-Muslim question, Rao Bahadur Damle observed : "It is now common knowledge how Turkey has emerged from war and in the light of the world knowledge the Angora Republic has shaken off the hold of old religious notions, ideals and prejudices. With the Turks religion does not stand above politics. Its claims on its followers have been subordinated to those of the State. In India, however, the same old notion is sticking in full force and the Mahomedans continue to attach to religion a higher place than to the duty towards the State. Their idea, as it appears to the outside world, seems to be that humanity has come into being and exists for the service of religion. With due respect to this religious doctrine which it is nobody's right to meddle with, it will be admitted on all hands that a substantially major part of the Mahomedan

everyday life is engaged like that of the non-Mahomedan population in attending to non-religious matters of purely worldly importance and in their life-long continuous associations with their fellowmen of different faiths they have very rare occasions to reflect the peculiar impress of religious preachings on their everyday actions and dealings. As men of the world, therefore, they have to subordinate the demands of religion to those of social and political duties." Continuing the speaker said: "The religious truths so far as they are divine claim common allegiance and homage from humanity as a whole. That being so the apparent points of antagonism discernible in what may be strictly deemed to be mere outward conventional appendages should not be regarded as of great significance and value. They may be made adjustable to suit varying needs and circumstances; such adjustment does not affect the high divine truths. It behoves the leaders of both the communities, therefore, to seriously consider the religious aspect of the situation and to find out a workable formula in practice to avoid the outbursts of religious passion and consequent communal disturbances."

The Non-Brahmin Movement.

Turning to the Non-Brahmin movement the Rao Bahadur pointed out:—"The assertion of individual rights is always welcome but higher social duty demands that the assertion of the right or its exercise need not be expressed in an offensive tone or manner. Further, the recognition of this right must be free from feelings of hatred and animosity. The Non-Brahmin agitation set on foot in some places assumes form which is distasteful and offensive and instead of winning public applause alienates public appreciation and sympathy. My earnest appeal to those who are leading this agitation is that they should guide its course so inoffensively and decently that it engenders no feeling of hatred, annoyance or disrespect towards the Brahmins as a class."

Election of the President.

Sir Chimanlal SITALVAD then proposed Sir Sivaswami Aiyar to take the chair. In doing so he said, since they separated from the Congress nine years ago the Liberals had demonstrated their usefulness in forming a separate organisation during these nine years. Though misrepresented, maligned, and abused the Liberal Party had pursued its principles and followed what it thought to be right in the real interest of the country and it was gratifying that slowly but surely the country was coming to realise that real salvation lay in following the principle advocated by the Liberal Party and not in following the claptrap of the people who promised Swaraj in a year or a month by plying the Charka and following the doctrines of civil disobedience and non-co-operation. The recent elections had also afforded them considerable encouragement and he instanced the overwhelming majorities secured by many of the adherents of the Liberal creed. He urged that the Liberal Party should be more active throughout the year in preaching its creed and it was sure to find more supporters. It only required steadfast working and firm belief in their principles to make them acceptable to the general population. Sir Chimanlal then referred to the large administrative experience of Sir Sivaswami, his work in connection with the Muddiman Committee and his high political sense and commanded him to take the chair.

Mr. C. Y. CHINTAMANI, is seconding the election of Sir Sivaswami to the chair, said that during the eight years since the old Congressmen deemed it necessary to separate themselves from that organisation and form a Liberal Party, there was none more uniformly loyal and faithful to the principles of the party and more constantly helpful to everyone connected with the party than Sir Sivaswami. He remembered his highly instructive Presidential Speech at Calcutta in 1919 and few at that time hoped that the Liberal Party would survive so long in spite of its numerical weakness. What change in public feeling had taken place since in their favour and what useful work they had been able to do was due in no small extent to Sir Sivaswami, lawyer, educationist, scholar, upright statesman, and patriot whom they claimed not only as a leader, but as a teacher. This year the Liberal Federation met in circumstances more critical; speaking with reference to its own internal affairs, than hitherto, and they required the help of a politician of great foresight and insight to give them a sagacious lead.

Mr. Jatindranath BASU, in supporting, said that Sir Sivaswami Aiyar had been all his life a great worker in India's national progress, having particular interest in the military organisation of the country for which India had been depending on an alien power. It was fortunate that they had Sir Sivaswami to lead their deliberations at this their critical stage.

After Mr. Pandit had also supported the election of Sir Sivaswami the proposition was carried with acclamation.

The Presidential Address.

Sir Sivaswami Aiyar then rose to deliver his long Presidential Address. The following are some of the important extracts from his speech :—

Liberal and Swarajist Creeds.

Let us now turn our eyes to the position of our own party. From the very moment of the inauguration of the reforms we adopted the view that, while the reforms fell short of our expectations and were defective in many respects, they marked a substantial step in advance of the previous state of things and that we were bound to work the reforms for what they are worth. The reforms opened to us new opportunities for useful constructive work and we felt we were not justified in throwing them away in a fit of sulkingness. There were imperfections inherent in the very structure of the scheme of the Act. There were difficulties created by the rules framed under the act and by the manner in which they were worked by the Governors. There were also difficulties created by the exceptional financial stringency which prevailed during the first term of the Legislative Councils. In spite of all these impediments we resolved to work the reforms in a spirit of co-operation with the Government. We were prepared to demonstrate our fitness for further advance by the success with which we could work the constitution. The goal of political parties in India is no doubt the same, but there are only two ways of attaining it—either with the consent of the British nation and Parliament or against their wishes and by force of arms. The latter method is so obviously impossible that no party in India has advocated it. But, as a substitute for a revolution by force of arms, the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation has been suggested. From the beginning we pointed out the dangers of the policy of non-co-operation and the difficulty of maintaining non-violence. The numerous outbreaks of violence that followed the inauguration of this policy have abundantly justified our warning. The enquiry made by the Congress Committee showed that the country was not prepared for mass civil disobedience. The policy of non-co-operation originally included the boycott of councils as well as schools and law courts. The boycott was a complete failure and the Swarajist party was then started with the object of wrecking the councils from inside. The policy was adopted against Mr. Gandhi's own advice and soon found to be impracticable. The Government of India Act has been framed with sufficient foresight to provide against all dead-locks which may be created by would-be wreckers and the Swarajist party has learned how impossible it is to wreck the constitution or bring the machinery of administration to a standstill.

Swarajist Failure.

The leader of the Swarajist party was obliged to confess during the last Delhi Session of the Assembly that the party had failed to achieve its object. He said that he had no further use for show institutions like the Assembly and that the least they could do to vindicate the honour and self-respect of the nation was to get out of them and go back to the country for work. He said that in the country they would try to devise those sanctions which alone could impel any Government to grant the demands of the people. He hoped and trusted that the nation would give a suitable reply to the truculent rejection of their demands and would send them again in larger numbers with a stronger mandate and, God willing, with the sanction for fulfilling its aspirations and enforcement of its commands. It is perhaps not strange that show institutions have a great fascination for the Swarajists and that they have again decided to enter the show-halls. The Swarajist party has not been returned in larger numbers except in Madras. May we ask what new weapons the learned Pandit has forged and what sanction for enforcing the commands of the people or of the Swarajist party he has secured? The sanction which he darkly hinted at could only be the sanction of mass civil disobedience. We wonder whether the country has since the 8th of March, 1936, been secretly or openly prepared for mass civil disobedience and whether it is any more fit to resort to this weapon than it was when the Congress Committee submitted its report. Knowing, as the Swarajists must do, that the country is now prepared to follow them in the stunt of civil disobedience, their talk of sanctions is meaningless and can only be sheer bluff. Many members of the Swarajist party cherish the belief that bluff may deceive the British people. But the British Government has been sufficiently long in this country to be able to distinguish between bluff and effective threats and prominent statesmen in the seats of authority have repeatedly warned us that, while the British Parliament would be willing to carry out its promises, it would never make any concessions to menaces or violence.

Changes of the Congress Creed.

The creed of the Congress party has undergone many changes. They have climbed down from their heights of non-co-operative aloofness to participation in the work of the councils. They have climbed down from a policy of uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction to a policy of supporting some at least of the measures for the benefit of the people. It is not however likely that the Swarajist party as a whole will abandon their infructuous policy and return from the barren wilderness to the paths of common sense and wisdom.

The Revolt of the Responsivists.

With the robust good sense and grip of actualities which is characteristic of the Maharashtra community, they have led a revolt against the fatuous policy of the Swarajist party and succeeded in forming the party of Responsive co-operation. We welcome the formation of this party which has practically adopted our creed, though it has not joined us and seems to fight shy of the name "Liberal". In what respects the creed of this party differs from ours and what its distinguishing characteristics are, I have not succeeded in ascertaining. But I prefer to dwell upon the large measure of agreement between their views and ours rather than upon any differences. All honour to the leaders of this revolt and I offer my felicitations to Mr. Kelkar, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Aney and other leaders on the conspicuous success which has attended their efforts. The formation of the Responsive Co-operation party is really a triumph of the principles for which the Liberal party has all along stood.

It is an irony of fate that, while the principles for which the Liberal party has stood have been slowly gaining recognition, the party itself should have fallen into disfavour with the people. But the explanation is not far to seek. In the first place, the policy of moderation does not appeal to the popular mind in the same way as a policy of extremist. A member of the Moderate or Liberal party, who is prepared to look at the different sides of a question and make allowances for them all, can never indulge in the same sweeping statements and denunciations, as a member of a party which refuses to look at the other side of the question or face realities and is prepared to recommend short-cuts, however dangerous, to the end in view. The Liberal party cannot possibly make specious promises of a millennium to be attained in months or weeks and can neither attribute all the evils under which the country is suffering to the foreign domination nor refuse to recognise the benefits that the country has derived from the British connection. In the second place, the Congress party owes an immense portion of its prestige to its association with the personality of Mahatma Gandhi. They have exploited

his influence to the utmost and profess to be followers of his impracticable constructive programme which a large number of them do not believe in. Witness, for instance, the use of khaddar on ceremonial occasions and the borrowing of khaddar clothing just before entering meetings of Congress Committees. Again, the Swarajist party has had the advantage of the widespread organisation of the Congress and its prestige. Having entered the temple of non-co-operation as worshippers they have quietly dethroned the simple-minded "Mohant" who is satisfied with the nominal allegiance and lip-homage of its followers. We have also to contend against the odium which has been sedulously created in the country against all persons who co-operate with the Government in any measure. The action of the Government in enhancing the salt tax by certification led the people into the belief that a policy of co-operation with the Government had no effect in restraining the Government from unpopular legislation. And let me finally add an observation borne out by our experience of social psychology that parties bent upon destruction display far greater zeal and energy than parties interested in construction or conservation. It is no wonder that under all these difficulties our party fell into disfavour with the people. We shared the unpopularity of the Government and got no credit for our achievements in the first term of the Legislative Assembly and Councils.

Our party lost heart and failed to cope with the situation. Our lack of enthusiasm and our woe-begone sense of despair are responsible for the present plight of our party. Parties with vastly larger funds and followers and far more efficient organisation like the Liberal party in England have suffered greater disasters. But, firmly convinced as we are of the soundness of our principles, we may with confidence look forward to a brighter day for the party of constitutionalism, by whatever name it may be called. Our party has had no occasion to revise its creed and is the only party in the country which has been throughout consistent in its principles. The fact that an influential section of the Congress has adopted the creed of Responsive co-operation is the best proof of the soundness of our creed. The dangers that we predicted as the result of a policy of non-co-operation have been raised. Beyond producing a spirit of distrust in the sincerity and intentions of the Government and beyond weakening the sense of respect for law and order, the policy of the Congress party has been barren of any results whether by way of constructive or destructive work. It passes my comprehension that men of light and leading like many of those who are members of the Swarajist party could still believe in the efficacy of their methods of attainment of Swaraj.

The Conditions of Further Advance.

Now that the time for the appointment of the Statutory Commission is approaching, it is to our interest to prove our fulfilment of the conditions of advance laid down in the preamble of the Government of India Act and in the speeches of British statesmen from time to time. Our Swarajist friends appeal to the doctrine of self-determination and ask what right one nation has to judge of the fitness or otherwise of another nation for responsible Government. Whatever may be the justice of this contention in the abstract, there is no wisdom in refusing to face hard facts. The British Government is ruling over the country and has no intention of leaving it, unless the Parliament is satisfied that the conditions imposed have been fulfilled. The British Government is the master of the situation and is not prepared to yield to any threats. The Congress party wished to make the position as hot and uncomfortable for the Government as possible so that they might yield to our demands and they have admittedly failed. There is a dictum of Hindu Law that facts cannot be altered by a hundred texts. To refuse to recognise the stern logic of facts may be a heroic pose but is not consistent with common sense. It would be not merely a peaceful but an easier road to the attainment of Swaraj to so shape our policy that we shall be able to satisfy the Statutory Commission that we have fulfilled our part of the bargain.

So far as we can judge from the utterances of British statesmen, the main point upon which they desire to be satisfied is our willingness to co-operate with the Government in working the reforms introduced in 1921. It is laid down in the preamble of the Government of India Act that the action of Parliament must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities for service will be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility. The Commission to be appointed under the Statute will be charged with the duty of inquiring into the working of this system of Government and reporting whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible Government or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of responsible Government existing at the time. We have from time to time pressed for the acceleration of the appointment of the Statutory Commission. Signs are not wanting of a disposition on the part of British statesmen to

advance the appointment of the Commission. One can see a marked change in their utterances and a tone of greater willingness to appoint the Commission earlier. From the point of view of those who consider that India has been and is already fit for responsible Government, the delay on the part of the Government in yielding to our demands for reconsideration and further advance is held to justify a suspicion of their intentions.

Let us, however, look at the other side of the shield and put ourselves for a moment in the position of the British statesmen. In the very first year of its existence, a resolution was moved in the Indian Legislative Assembly for the establishment of autonomy in the provinces and the introduction of responsibility in the Central Government. Eventually, it was passed in an amended form requesting the communication to the Secretary of State of the view of the Assembly that the progress made by India in the path of responsible Government warranted a re-examination and revision of the constitution at an earlier date than 1929. May it not be said with some show of reason that the resolution was premature and need we wonder at the reply of Lord Peel that the new machinery had still to be tried in its working and that the merits and capabilities of the electorates had not been tested by time and experience? A resolution was again moved in 1923 by Dr. Gour and in 1924 a resolution was passed on the motion of Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar recommending the early revision of the Government of India Act.

While these resolutions show that the Legislative Assembly did not relax its efforts to secure a revision of the constitution, the view of English politicians that these attempts were premature or indicated impatience cannot be regarded as unnatural or as indicating an intention on their part not to honour the promises of the Parliament. When the Labour party which is the most friendly to us came into power, the Premier, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, declared in his message to India that no party in Great Britain would be cowed by threats of force or by policies designed to bring the Government to a standstill. He urged upon all the best friends of India to come nearer to Britain rather than to stand apart and get at the reason and goodwill of the British.

I now pass on to another difficulty pointed out as one of the hindrances to the attainment of responsible Government, viz., the control of the defence. The difficulty is not one of our creation. It is the Government which is responsible for our present inability to take charge of the control of the defence of our country. It is only after the great war that the Government have professed any sympathy with the aspirations of Indians to enter the higher military ranks and their professions of sympathy have not yet been materially translated into practice. Even at the present moment, there is no evidence of any concern or desire on the part of Government to make this country self-sufficient in the constitution and organisation of its defensive forces. The British Government is quite alive to the value of the resources of India in man-power for the army but has no wish to utilise Indian talent for the officering of the Indian army in the same or even in any appreciable measure. Reforms in the direction of Indianisation are an uphill task even in the civil services of the administration but they are far more so in the military services. No one, who is acquainted with the long delays of the Government of India and of the Imperial Government in arriving at a decision on proposals relating to the training of the people for defence, will wonder at the popular dissatisfaction thereby caused. The Report of the Territorial and Auxiliary Forces Committee was submitted to the Government in the beginning of last year and the orders of the Secretary of State are still awaited. The establishment of an Indian Sandhurst at an early date was recommended to the Government so far back as 1921. It was only in 1925 that the Government was prepared to take action even to the extent of appointing a committee to consider the subject. The Skeen Committee is said to have just concluded its labours and submitted its report to the Government of India. How many months or even years the Imperial Government will take to pass orders on the subject we cannot forecast. All the more important resolutions of the Assembly with regard to the Indianisation of the Army have either not been carried out yet, or been refused. Though the Air Force will play the most important role in future warfare its doors are closed against us as in other important branches of the army. The scheme of a Royal Indian Navy is in a process of slow embryonic development.

The Real Reasons.

While we cannot acquit the Government of blame for our past helplessness in the matter of defence, it is not difficult to understand the reasons for their unwillingness to embark on any considerable scheme of Indianisation. The Government cannot completely get rid of the old notion that India must be kept by the sword not in the sense of being administered by a system of martial law, but in the sense that the maintenance of British Rule must in the last resort depend not upon the civil administrator but upon the

control of the army. Britain does not mind experiments in the sphere of civil administration, so long as she keeps the army in her control. They feel they cannot afford to Indianise the army, because they do not feel sure what its reactions will be on the maintenance of the British ascendancy or connection. It is this lack of faith in the loyalty of India to the British Empire that is really the underlying motive of the attitude of the Government. There are other reasons also which have no little influence upon the policy of the Imperial Government, though we cannot be expected to sympathize in or attach any weight to them. I may here quote an extract from Sir Valentine Chirol's book on 'India'. It is observed by that fair-minded writer :

"Though the army department may wish now to approach it (question of Indianisation) chiefly from the point of view of military efficiency, it has to reckon with the strong racial objections of British officers to being placed in the position of ever having to take orders from Indian officers. Nor can one ignore the danger of personal friction between the British and the Indian officers with their very different outlook and social habits if they are made to rub shoulders in a common mess-room. But the feeling goes deeper and experienced British Officers, not unnaturally proud of the confidence and even personal affection of their native officers as well as their men, are found to declare that the Englishman's prestige with the native troops themselves will be gone, if they are ever placed under other than British command. Indians whom education has trained to modern standards of self-respect resent deeply such a stigma of racial inferiority."

British statesmen have often acknowledged in the past and are now in the habit of proclaiming that they hold India as trustees for the people. Is it unreasonable to ask whether our self-constituted trustees have ever displayed any consciousness of an obligation to hand over to the people the army which is being maintained at their expense or to train their "cestis quis trahent" to officer and control their military establishment. The Government of India Act declares the policy of Parliament to be to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the Indian administration. This would certainly include the military as well as the civil branches of the administration. If the British Government as our trustees have made no attempt to prepare us for our responsibility for the defence of our country, it is necessary in our interest and for the credit of our trustees that we should press them to declare and affirm explicitly the goal of their military policy in India and to frame a suitable scheme of Indianisation to enable us to reach the goal within a generation at least.

Concluding Sir Sivaswamy said :

Our Relations to other Parties.

The public is often impatient at the existence of a number of parties in the country and believes that if they could all be merged into one and unite their forces, it will be easier to attain the national goal. They are disposed to censure the party politicians and to attribute motives of personal glorification or aggrandizement to them. There are other countries also where new parties have been formed for the purpose of attracting notoriety to the leaders or gratifying their ambition of self-advancement. While the multiplication of parties for such purposes deserves to be deprecated, the existence of vital differences of opinion in matters of principle cannot be ignored. The suppression of such differences in the interests of artificial unity is injurious to the honesty of public life. All artificial unity must share the inevitable fate of bunkam. While it is not possible for the Liberal party to sacrifice its convictions or merge itself in any party which differs in essential principles, we are prepared to co-operate with the members of other parties, wherever it is possible for us to do so on particular questions. It is in that spirit that Mr. Chintamani made gallant efforts in 1925 to bring about a coalition. The failure of his efforts was due to no fault of ours. It will be our duty and our policy to co-operate with any and every party in all questions where we can see eye to eye with them.

The Work Before Us.

The oriental has often been accused by Western nations of a tendency to fitful work. There is some truth in this charge. We have our fits of feverish excitement and our fits of apathy and depression. One of the virtues we have to learn from Englishmen is that of dogged perseverance and steady work. Our energies are like our mountain streams, at times flowing in torrents but more often drying up. Our energies have to be dammed up and directed into a steady perennial stream flowing not over the rocky beds of non-cooperation and indiscriminate obstruction, but over the fertile and promising fields of constructive constitutional work and social welfare that remain neglected. Another virtue we have to learn from the Englishman is what has been described as the 'commitment sense.' I will give you one illustration of the lack of it. When the enhancement of the

salt tax to make up the deficit in the budget came before the Assembly, some of us suggested a distribution of the burden under other heads also, like income-tax and customs. We had an informal representative conference of the members of the Assembly and, after an excited discussion for three hours during which the Bombay men would not hear of an addition to income-tax and the Calcutta men would not hear of an addition to the customs duties, we parted without arriving at any agreement and the enhancement proposed by the Government was carried. Let us resolve upon constructive work in the councils of the country and let us realise that with the increasing remission of provincial contributions more funds will be released for such work. In the field of education, co-operation and social reform, there is a vast field of useful work which demands our attention and our energies: The Liberal party in particular has yet to learn the virtues of organisation, of self-sacrifice, personal, pecuniary or both, and of sustained work from day to day and from year to year. Let us not allow our souls to be palsied by despair but work with a courage which will quail before no obstacle and a sturdy optimism which will endure any reverse or disappointment and success is bound to crown our efforts for the welfare and progress of our fatherland.

Proceedings and Resolutions.

SECOND DAY—THE 28TH DECEMBER 1926.

1.—Murder of S. Shradhanand.

The National Liberal Federation resumed its session on the next day the 28th December and proceeded with resolutions. The first resolution put from the chair and passed in silence, the audience standing, recorded the sense of horror at the murder of Swami Shradhanand and the loss sustained by the country in the death of the great patriot, educationist and religious and social reformer. Another resolution similarly passed recorded the sense of regret at the death of Sir Krishna Gupta, N. M. Samarth, Rao Bahadur W. R. Dhoble and others.

2.—Indians Abroad.

The next resolution expressing the earnest hope that the Conference between the Delegates of the Government of India and South Africa might result in the repeal of the Colour Bar legislation and securing for the Indian settlers free and full citizenship rights and urging that Indians settled in any part of the Empire should be accorded the rightful position as equal subjects of the King was proposed by Mr. Venkatesh Narain Tewari. The mover after enumerating disabilities said that by these annual protests they could at least show that they were not parties to the iniquities under which Indians abroad were suffering.

Mr. V. N. Deshpande, in seconding, said the real cause of the trouble was that Britishers in the Colonies looked upon Indians as an inferior race. There could be no bargaining for their natural rights. They must have them and hoped the Round Table Conference would be able to solve the question.

The resolution was unanimously passed.

3.—Release of Bengal Detenues.

Rao Bahadur Jayavant moved a resolution to the effect that the Liberal Federation strongly reiterates its protest against the continued detention of many persons in Bengal under the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1925 and urges that they should be either set free or tried under ordinary criminal law. The Federation again urges the repeal of the said Act as well as of the Deportation regulations of 1818, 1819 and 1827. The mover said that since this iniquitous measure came on the statute book, the whole of India opposed it and urged for its repeal. The measure was a disgrace to India and should be repealed at once. The opposition to it had not died down as wrongly stated in the moral and material progress of India issued by the Home Department but would continue as long as they were there. He urged that the Bengal internees should either be set free or tried in law courts.

Mr. Jatindranath Basu, in seconding the resolution, said that the British nation claimed to be the most advanced and democratic nation imbued with a high sense of justice with a most advanced system of administration, but looking at these legislative enactments it seemed that India instead of progressing onwards was receding backwards. So many Bengalee youngmen to be kept interned without trial on the information of subordinate police officers was a disgrace to the British administration in India. If the British Government in India had given even small attention to public health and material interest of Bengal than they were giving to the revolutionary movement which was confined to a very small section of the population then there would have been no such movement at all. He hoped that the Government would show greater statesmanship by releasing the internees.

Mr. Digbe, supporting the resolution, said that every province in India felt keenly on the subject. Release of the Bengal internees would go a great way to pacify the political atmosphere of the country.

The resolution was carried with acclamation.

4.—Separation of Judiciary and Executive.

The next resolution urging immediate and complete separation of judicial and executive functions and services moved by Mr. D. G. Dalvi, seconded by Babu Surendranath Varma and supported by Mr. V. M. Kelker of Nagpur was carried.

5.—Hindu-Muslim Relations.

The next resolution on Hindu-Muslim relations was moved by Sir Chimanlal SETALVAD. The resolution ran thus :—

The National Liberal Federation of India deploras the estrangement of Hindu-Muslim relations, exhorts both communities to make earnest and sustained efforts to bring about better understanding and urges the Government to see that law is enforced with firmness and strict impartiality in all matters likely to engender communal friction."

Sir Chimanlal, in moving the resolution, said that it was a very important matter that all public men in all public institutions had to deal with and unless some method was devised to remove the present undesirable tension between the two great communities all their hopes of placing India in her proper position among the nations and of political advancement were doomed

to failure. The country divided as at present and the two communities full of distrust of each other could never expect to attain self-Government. Already the Hindu-Muslim division had no doubt been very much exploited by the enemy of the country to keep them back, but it was at the same time no use minimising its importance. The speaker then went on giving the causes that had led to the present undesirable state of things. He deplored the conspicuous absence of Mussalmans from their political gatherings of late, both Liberal Federation and National Congress sessions. They had of late begun to regard that they must have their own separate political organisations and their interests to be separately guarded though in their organisations they do nothing different. They make the same demands for political advancement of the country. What was behind this distrust of each other? According to the speaker, the reasons that had engendered distrust were more political than religious and did not appear to be real. He declared that their Hindu leader, Mr. Gandhi, was primarily responsible for the present state of distrust. It was due to one of the many Himalayan mistakes committed by the Mahatma that he chose to mix religion with politics. It was he who dragged in the Khilafat politicians and it was he who encouraged Mahomedans to look to the affairs of other countries as matters more than their immediate interests as citizens of the Indian Empire. However, the fact remains that the interests of Mahomedans in India are Indian. They suffer under the same disabilities and their interests are absolutely identical. It behoved the leaders of the two communities to remove this feeling of distrust instead of emphasising the differences. He deplored the speech of Sir Abdur Rahim at Aligarh last year. Nothing is gained by emphasising the differences but real statesmanship lay in trying to bring both the communities together. He also deplored any utterances of Hindu leaders that might tend to irritate the feelings of Mahomedans in respect of Suddhi and Sangathan movements though, in the speaker's opinion, they were legitimate movements. Sir Chimanlal appealed for a common understanding by removing the apprehension of the Muslims being swamped in any political arrangement about the administration of the country by a give and take policy.

Mr. C. Y. CHINTAMANI, in seconding the resolution, made a feeling speech in the course of which he said it would be more than a platitude if he was to enlarge upon the information on the estrangement of relations between the two communities. Two years ago, the Unity Conference was held in Delhi on the initiative of the then President of the Congress and the late lamented Swami Shraddhanand and was attended by prominent representatives of all communities. That Conference lasted for nearly a week and amply dealt with the various points of disagreement. The Conference left out purely political questions of communal representation in public bodies and public services. The speaker was also going to leave out that aspect of the problem. The conclusions arrived at the Delhi Conference were reasonable and even the Liberal Federation had given its consent. It was a thousand pities that no success had attended those efforts. The position now was peculiar in Northern India, including Bengal. This question agitated more the public mind than music before the Mosque during the last year or so. If the relations between the two communities to-day to all appearances were more unfortunate than they were in the recent past the reason for this situation is to be found in the manner in which the newfangled

demand of the Muslims to stop music before mosques at all times had been dealt with by those in authority. The resolution before the meeting urges the Government to see that law is enforced with firmness and strict impartiality in all matters which tended to communal friction. The clause he said had been in the resolution for good and sufficient reasons. Calcutta delegates and those from U. P. would be able to testify that the attitude of administrative authorities in dealing with such questions left a great deal to be desired. He then referred to the situation in the United Provinces and particularly the Ramlila procession incident at Allahabad where the District Magistrate sought to enforce unprecedented restrictions upon the liberty of the Hindu community to take out the time-honoured procession. The District Magistrate gave out that he would not allow the procession to be taken out unless the Ramlila Committee agreed to take out the procession at hours which would not conflict with prayers in any Mosques situated on public roads. When it was pointed that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council had laid down that it was the civil right of the citizens to take out such processions subject only to the duty of the Magistrate to make such regulations as in his judgment were necessary for the preservation of public peace, the only reply forthcoming from the Magistrate was that Mussalmans were the most generous and that they did not object to music before all Mosques except two and that Hindus, on the other hand, were not prepared to make any concession to Mussalmans.

Mr. Chintamani then referred to similar highhanded acts of the Magistracy at Aligarh and Etawa and asked if it was worthy of the Government which prided itself upon the establishment of British rule in this country and put forward as its main justification for its continued existence here as the dominant party that it was an impartial arbitrator to keep the peace between warring Hindus and Mahomedans to fail in such a deplorable manner?

The speaker then referred to the memorable speech of Lord Irwin at the Chelmsford Club which inspired them with noble thoughts and assured them that Government Officers in circumstances of exceptional difficulty tried their best and successfully to act with impartiality to prevent or to minimise disturbances. He did not balance the Viceroy for having spoken thus in his first year's regime, but since then attempts had been made to impress on His Excellency that he should no longer be content with what provincial Governments might tell him but that it was at least possible that there are some circumstances when the Viceroy should have made impartial and independent enquiries and tried to arrive at the truth. In this resolution the Government were asked to see that the law was strictly enforced with impartiality. He was personally of opinion that they were on strong grounds in making the accusation against some of the local Government officials. He next referred to the Rajeswari procession in Calcutta and opined that the order was so manifestly unfair that Hindu leaders who always kept aloof from affairs with all reluctance deemed it essential to protest against the Government. In the United Provinces he declared the Government were simply immovable. Hindus of Allahabad asked the local Government not to give an ex-parte judgment but to institute an enquiry and the reply was that no enquiry was wanted. In Delhi, Muslims were given permission to take out the sacrificial cow in procession on the Bakr-Id day in spite of the Hindus' protest. Even Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was constrained to protest against such Government action.

Concluding, Mr. Chintamani said that the Liberal Party should consider it the first duty to do everything in their power so far as opportunities were opened to them to remove misunderstandings between the two communities but it was also a complement of the same duty that they must not hesitate to tell the Government what they thought of its part in the affairs in the past.

Mr. Mainkar supported the resolution in Marathi which was then carried.

6.—Co-operative Organisation and Army Indianisation.

The next resolution regarding the improvement of the condition of the people by measures of better organisation of the co-operative movement and free and universal education was moved by Mr. N. M. Joshi who emphasised the importance of the work among the masses. He was supported by Messrs. Parthasarathi Iyengar, Dalip Mansingh and R. K. Satarkar.

Pandit Hirdaynath Kunzru moved that the Government should make an explicit declaration defining the goal of British policy to be the making of India self-sufficient in the matter of defence within a reasonable short period and the Government should take effective steps towards the Indianisation of the Army. The establishment of an Indian Sandhurst and reduction of military expenditure were points emphasised by the mover. He was supported by Messrs. J. N. Basu and M. B. Marathe.

Both the resolutions were passed and the Federation adjourned till next day.

THIRD DAY—THE 29TH DECEMBER 1926.

The third day's session of the National Liberal Federation of India was resumed at 1-30 in the afternoon.

7.—C. P. Land Revenue Enhancement.

Rao Bahadur K. V. Brahma moved an emphatic protest against the Central Provinces Government in giving effect to the enhancement of land revenue assessment in some talukas against the opinion of the Berar Legislative Committee and even without the Government of India's sanction to the principles of the assessment as required by the Joint Select Committee of the two Houses of Parliament and recommending that the collection should be suspended till the necessary legislation was passed with the approval of the Berar people. The mover urged that taxation should not be based on what was just. He urged that the Government of India should discharge its trust by taking the people of Berar into confidence in fixing the principles of assessment.

Rao Bahadur Mahajani, in seconding, said that Berar was in a peculiar position being neither British nor in the Nizam's Dominions. It had no legislative Council of its own and was helpless. In support of the resolution, he pointed out that agricultural indebtedness in Berar was increasing rapidly and it was impossible for agriculturists to bear the burden of the enhanced assessment.

Rao Bahadur Khare, Messrs. Namdeo Rao, Patil and others supported the resolution which was carried.

8. — Propaganda Work.

The next resolution emphasising the urgent necessity of educating the electorate and calling upon the Liberal Associations to take up the work of organisation was moved by Rao Bahadur Kale of Satara and seconded by Messrs. Gadre, Deshpande, Altekar and M. B. Marathe from Belgaum and was carried. The two last named speakers made eloquent appeal for funds for propaganda and it was announced amidst cheers that Mr. Venkatesh S. Mudholkar of Akola who professed Swarajist faith so long had joined the Liberal League and had contributed Rs. 101 towards its propaganda funds.

9. — Indianisation of the Services.

Rao Bahadur Mahajani then moved :

"The National Liberal Federation is of opinion, (1) that there should be rapid Indianisation of all superior civil services; (2) that principles and conditions of recruitment for all such services should vest in the Government of India; (3) that actual recruitment should be made by an Independent statutory body like the Civil Service Commissioners in England, and (4) that direct recruitment should be by means of examination and not of nomination by Government."

In moving the above resolution Rao Bahadur Mahajani said that communal representation was detrimental to public interests and that recruitment to higher services should be made by holding competitive examinations and not by Government nomination.

Rao Bahadur Dr. C. B. Rama Rao of Bangalore, in seconding the resolution, narrated his experience in the medical service regarding the disabilities of Indians and the injustice they suffer from.

The resolution was supported by Mr. S. G. Vaze and carried.

10. — Revision of the Indian Constitution.

Sir Moropant Joshi next moved :—

"The Federation reiterates its conviction of the necessity of revision of the present constitution of the Central and Provincial Governments on the following lines :—

1. India should be accorded the same status as the Dominions.
2. Except in respect of foreign and political affairs and of the defence of the country for a transitory period, the Secretary of State in relation to the Government of India should occupy a position analogous to that of the Secretary of State for Colonies in relation to Dominions.
3. The Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished.
4. The superintendence, direction and control of revenues and administration of British India should be vested in His Excellency the Governor-General in Council.
5. While for the transitory period His Excellency the Governor-General should remain responsible to His Majesty's Government and British Parliament for the foreign and political relations of the Government of India and for the defence of the country, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council should be responsible to the Legislative Assembly in the whole sphere of internal civil administration.
6. Provincial Governments should be responsible to the respective Legislative Councils and Governors should be constitutional Governors.
7. Indians should be trained for and freely admitted to all arms of defence and such financial provision should be made for their training as the Legislative Assembly may decide.
8. The Legislative Assembly and Legislative Councils should be wholly elected bodies with due provision for the protection of the rights of important minorities."

Sir Moropant JOSHI, in moving the resolution, said that the general principles which had been found capable of being worked properly had been

put as a basis of recommendation to the Government. Now that the Statutory Commission was coming to India later than it ought to have come and after six years of vain regrets and methods found unworkable, they had come back to their old principles. He was proud to belong to the Liberal Party which kept its mental attitude undisturbed, though the whole country was practically upset. Though they did not claim credit for inspiring others with liberal methods, they kept up an ideal to which everybody now found it necessary to conform. That was why they valued Liberalism. From the very beginning they asked for Dominion Status. Those who did not agree with them reviled them for not asking for Swaraj. The speaker wanted to nail the lie to the counter. The Liberals expressed joy when the Reforms were introduced for complete acceptance by the Government of the country of the change from autocracy to democracy and admission of the principle. They declared even then that that was not enough. From the beginning the Congress and the Liberal leaders had this idea of Dominion Status and nothing else. During the last six years of experiment, the Liberal Party had done eminent service which would be remembered and had been telling the Government that the Reforms conceded were not enough. They agreed to work them in the spirit in which they were given and proved themselves fit to work them. After the working had shown that the Reforms given would not meet their aspirations and would not be for good Government which it should be, they had shown that it was not what Indians wanted. He reminded the critics that the value of Liberalism lay in the manner in which the banner was kept flying and the mental equilibrium kept intact. Lord Birkenhead's speech had borne him out that unless there was response and co-operation, no advancement was possible. That was the dictum of the rulers in spite of threats. Thus the condition was such that they were not in a position to wrest the power from the rulers, but only by a spirit of co-operation should they succeed. There were signs on the horizon that Lord Birkenhead was taking a favourable view of the matter. Everybody now felt that the Liberal methods were right. The Council elections had also demonstrated that responsiveness was upheld by the intelligentsia of the country.

Coming to the National Demand, he said it was no other than the Dominion Self Government put forward by the Legislative Assembly. If there was unanimity, the goal would be achieved soon.

Mr. C. Y. CHINTAMANI, in seconding the resolution, said that the present constitution could be only worked with such difficulty and constant friction that neither efficient administration nor contentment of the people could be secured by continuing it with all its defects. There being nothing sacrosanct in a date, he urged there should be no reluctance on the part of the British Parliament or the British public to undertake at an earlier date the examination of the defects revealed by the working of this system. It is first of all asked in the resolution that India should be accorded Dominion Status on the lines recently laid down by the Imperial Conference as a result of which statesmen like General Hertzog who had previously stood up for separation from British Empire went back to South Africa and told his fellow Boers that they need no longer be dissatisfied with their position within the British Empire. The position of India had been dismissed summarily. It was stated there that the Conference recognised India as the most important part of the Empire. According to the Government of India Act 1919, "At present the Government of India lays down that the superintendence

and control of the revenue and the administration of British India shall have been in the hands of the Secretary of State for India in Council." We are not satisfied with that position. We want that the controlling authority should be the Government of India in India and not the distant Secretary of State, ignorant and irresponsible to the people of India: but in view of the conditions that exist, conditions for which we are not primarily responsible in view of the circumstances that we are not ready at the present moment and cannot be prepared for the military defence of the country, and in view of the complicating fact of the position of Indian States in India, we make the reservation that for the transitory period in respect of the foreign and political affairs and the defence of the country the Governor-General shall retain his responsibility to His Majesty's Government and to the British Parliament. Dyarchy that exists in the provincial Governments has compelled provincial Governments to be divided into two heads, reserved and transferred. We make no such recommendation with regard to the constitution of the Central Government. We only say that the Governor should remain responsible to the Secretary of State for the administration of foreign, political and military for a transitory period. That the present position in the Central Government is highly unsatisfactory was admitted in anticipation by the distinguished authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report and it has been admitted, it may be indirectly and by implications but still admitted substantially and without doubt, by no less a responsible man than Lord Irwin in his speech at Calcutta. His Excellency observed the sovereign defect of this constitution. Things should be as they are and from what we have known of the high character and the just-mindedness of Lord Irwin, I trust we may hope that if only our representatives in the Legislative Assembly give a good account of themselves, we shall find in His Excellency a warm friend and adherent. As regards Provincial Governments it is necessary in the interests of good administration for the uplift of the people that the present constitution of Provincial Governments should be amended without avoidable delay and no part of the scheme with regard to the province is more urgently needed than such a transformation of the position of the Governor as to make him a constitutional Governor and not an arbitrary being that he at present is. This is the feature viz., the irresponsibility of the Governor of the revision, and that alone can be described as an outward revision which will place the Governor in the same position in which Governors are in the Dominions.

In the last clause of the resolution we have urged that the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Councils should be wholly elected bodies. One need not labour the proposition that responsible Government is utterly incompatible with the existence in the legislatures of members whose only constituency is the Government House. If you want the Governors to be responsible to the legislatures, you must have nothing less than that those legislatures should be representative of the country and should not be constituted so as to enable the Government always or frequently to hold the key so as to be in a position to determine the result of divisions. For such reasons, it is essential that the legislature should consist entirely of elected members.

The question of the rights of important minorities is a matter which has received great consideration in the past and will need equal consideration in the future,

In concluding, he appealed to the Liberals to bear in mind that the

growth of the Hindu Muslim disagreements was being put forward as an almost invincible argument against action at an earlier date in the desired direction. This being so, their efforts to minimise disagreements and promote good understanding and mutual confidence should be in proportion to the keenness of their desire to win self-Government at an early date.

The resolution being further supported by Messrs. G. K. Gadgil and others was passed unanimously.

Sir Moropant Joshi then proposed a vote of thanks to the Reception Committee and the President for having given them a wise guidance.

President's Concluding Speech.

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, in reply, said that he was anxious about the success of the Federation. The Conference had been a success owing to the efforts of Rao Bahadur K. G. Damle. He thanked the volunteers for their arduous work. He was depressed by the unpopularity of the party, but it was his joyful experience that there was much enthusiasm among the Liberals in Akola. He had no doubt about the future of the party. It stood for commonsense and constructive work. If the country returned to wisdom, it was due to the activities of the Liberals. He had great admiration for the Maharashtra community for steadfast work. They had the virtue of perseverance. The Mahratta led the movement against the Mughals and the same spirit would be required to fight for Swaraj. He said that Rao Bahadur Kale had impressed on them the necessity of educating the electorate. He hoped that Maharashtra would set an example to other provinces. Public spirit and wealth did not go together. Given the necessary zeal and enthusiasm, the public could be persuaded to their point of view. Want of success of the party was due to the failure to carry their work to the country. Propaganda work in all directions was, therefore, necessary.

This concluded the President's speech and the Federation was declared closed and the President was profusely garlanded amidst cheers.

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE

All-India Hindu Mahasabha

GAUHATI—THE 28TH DECEMBER 1926.

The special session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha sat on the 28th December in the evening in the Congress Pandal after the Congress had concluded its sessions. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya took the chair. The whole of the big Pandal was packed to its fullest capacity. A large number of village and hill-folk were present. The proceedings began with the "Bande Mataram" song."

Chairman's Speech.

Mr. Hem Chandra GOSWAMI, Chairman, Reception Committee in welcoming the delegates said :—

"I consider it a proud privilege to accord a hearty welcome to the great leaders of thought in the Indian Empire to this ancient city of Pragjotishpur of hallowed memory standing on the ruins of an ancient civilization, as ancient as the rocks you see around you. Although we have lost our independence only a hundred years ago, judging from our present state you can very well cry in astonishment 'oh, how fallen, how changed.' Our members are so few, being decimated every year by Malaria, Kalazar and other epidemic diseases and our resources so splendid having no trade, no commerce, no industry to depend upon that. We really do not know how to give you a suitable reception. We are quite alive to our short-coming of not being able to look after your personal comforts as we wished in the heart of our hearts, but, I assure you on behalf of the Reception Committee, that we have spared no pains to do our little best in the country. With these words I invite you gentlemen to deliberate on the future welfare of the Hindus as a nation. We have now arrived at such a initial moment in our national life that if you fail to put our heads together and devise the best means possible to consolidate the Hindus of different provinces and formulate plans for a concerted action we are sure to perish at a no distant time. It will scarcely lead India in the path of progress if we devote our whole energy for its political salvation leaving aside all other activities to take care of themselves. The Hindus have now well high forgotten their noble tradition and the true mission of life. If we intend to live as a nation, as a progressive and vigorous nation, we must all combine casting aside all our petty provincial differences. Though the highest aim of Hinduism is the unification of all the diversities and to see unity in the midst of diversities, by the irony of fate we have acquired the knack of creating differences where there are none.

"Gentlemen, I now invite your attention to the following points :—(1) It is high time that we should organise a solid religious association for the whole of India having its branches in different provinces to advance the cases of Hindus and Hinduism. (2) Hinduism is said to be not a prose-

lytising religion but in Assam the conversions of Animestic people is going on almost every day before our very nose. We should try our best to convert these people to our faith with the help of the religious heads. (3) We should try to uplift the depressed classes of India. (4) Hindu boys and girls should be taught physical culture so that they may defend themselves against their enemy. (5) To establish inter-provincial communications we should have a weekly paper in Hindi to propagate these ideas amongst the masses of the Hindus; this will also facilitate the spreading of the knowledge of Hindi among them.

"Gentlemen, the Hon'ble President, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has already done yeomen's service to the Hindu nation by his earnest endeavours to bring together the diverging forces working in the Hindu society. I mention with great pleasure the name of our illustrious countryman Lala Lajpat Rai, Dr. Moonjie and Swami Satyananda and numerous others who are working in the same field. It is most gratifying to the Hindu mission under the guidance of Swamis Satyananda, Nagisananda and Kumar Bimalendu Rai and others who have already reclaimed over 500 families in the Garo Hills, Khasi Hills and Assam Valley. You know Babu Piyush Kanti Ghose of the 'Amrita Bazar Patrika' to whose untiring zeal the Sammilani owes its origin is also a very powerful advocate of its cause. I am sure, there are many persons in different provinces who would help our cause. Our duty is to find out these persons and allot to them the proper share of their work. To organise such an association you could not have selected a better place than this. We sat here under the feet of our mother Kamakhya by whose grace we expect to attain our noble object. I welcome you gentlemen most cordially, the members of the Hindu Maha Sammilani and delegates to Pandu over the mighty problem of the Hindu nation and find out their satisfactory solutions.

"You must have been shocked at the cruel news of the tragic end of the great Hindu leader Swami Shradhananda brought about by a Moslem assassin. Though we all deplore this dastardly murder we must remember that this and such acts instead of damping our spirit should put us in mettle and goad us to more concerted work.

Pt. Malaviya's Address.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya then came to the rostrum and delivered his extempore speech. He said that the great assembly met under a great shadow of grief for the death of Swami Shradhananda, the greatest worker of the Hindu cause.

Giving a brief history of the Swami's life Pt. Malaviya said that the Swami had sacrificed his all for the establishment of the Gurukula for the training of young men in national and social service. He had also courted imprisonment for the political struggle of the country.

Continuing Pt. Malaviya said, "Swami Shradhananda was the pioneer of the Suddhi movement. It was he who really felt about the desire of those Hindus who had once forsaken their religion and he inaugurated the Suddhi movement. Up to the last day of his life he thought for Suddhi, and Sangathan. But he was murdered by a cowardly assassin in his sick bed (shame, shame). The Swami was the martyr of the Hindu cause just as Guru Teg Bahadur was the martyr of the Sikh. Because the Swami is dead the

Hindus should work out his work—Suddhi and Sangathan. The Swami never did wrong. Mussalmans convert people of other faiths to their own religion every day. It is, therefore, not improper for the Hindus to do Suddhi work. I would like to emphasise that in his Suddhi and Sangathan work the Swami never followed the path of wrong. If the Mussalmans stop their Tabliq I would like to see the Hindus also give up their Suddhi. A resolution will be placed before you to fix a day for the Hindus all over the world to mourn over the death of the great man and pray for the peace of his soul. A proposal will also be made before you to start a memorial fund to commemorate the Swami's death. I hope you will accept the resolution and work up to it. Swami Shradhananda was a Congress worker and he never lagged behind in the fight for political freedom of the country. Following the ideal of the Swami every Hindu and Mussalman should take a solemn vow not to do any such act as may promote communal tension, either by writing or by speaking.

"Every Hindu knows that to create knowledge and the love of God the Hindu religion is a precious one. But it is very much regrettable that the Hindus have been losing their faith in the magnanimity of their religion. I think that every Hindu should help the Hindu Sabha by deed, word and thought. Arrangements should be made in every village for holding small religious congregation where the people of the village can go and attend the congregational prayer. In this way we can bring more life into the Hindu race by instituting the religious feeling in their mind.

"I have travelled from the Himalayas to Kumarika on the one side and from Karachi to Dibrugarh on the other, but sincerely speaking I have never seen the like of a simple and sincere people as the Assamese. Missionaries have been converting hundreds of Hindus of the Garo, Khasi and other hills. It is high time that the Hindus should keep those Hill tribes into their faith.

"The opium consumption is a very pernicious custom in Assam. Preachings should be done by all to give up that bad and ruinous custom. If you can put a stop to this I shall deem my visit to Assam successful. I am really glad to meet Swami Gurumaru, the most influential religious preceptor. I hope you will do missionary work throughout Assam with Swami Gurumaru as your leader. You should try to start one Hindu Sabha and Katha Sabha in every village and if you can do this, you will save the dying Hindu race from ruin.

In conclusion Pt. Malaviya said:—"It is high time also to eradicate the evils that have been sapping the life blood of the Hindus. We should stop early marriages, guard the helpless widows and the religious temples and take up cow protection work."

Resolutions.

The following resolutions were taken up for discussion at the second day's sitting of the Sabha on the 29th December, excepting resolution No. 1 which was disposed of on the 1st day. All the resolutions were passed unanimously.

1.—Late Swami Shradddhananda.

"The Mahasabha expresses its abhorrence of the cowardly, cold-blooded and treacherous murder by a Mussalman fanatic of the brave and noble patriot and an honourable

leader of the Hindu community, Swami Shraddhanandaji, who had consecrated his life to the service of the motherland in general and of the Hindu community in particular when he was lying in sickbed after an attack of serious illness. While mourning the great loss caused by the death of the Swamiji, the Mahasabha recalls with pride that he became a victim to the pistol of the assassin for no other reason than his honourable devotion to and dauntless courage in carrying on the sacred work of Suddhi and Sangathan which he carried on with scrupulous fairness. The Mahasabha offers its deep sympathy to sons and other relatives of the deceased in their sad bereavement. The Mahasabha calls upon every Hindu, wherever he or she may be, to show his or her grateful reverence for the Swamiji by offering Tilanjali and prayers for him on Sunday the 9th January 1927."

2.—Swami Shraddhanand Memorial.

"The Mahasabha further resolves to raise a permanent endowment fund of Rs. 5 lakhs to be known as "Swami Shraddhanand memorial" with a view to carry on the work of Suddhi and Sangathan and hereby calls upon every Hindu, high and humble, to contribute his quota to the fund and to send the amount to the Manager, Punjab National Bank, at Delhi or at any other branch of it. The Sabha also requests every Hindu organisation to collect and remit contributions to this fund to the said bank at Delhi or to any other branch of it and to intimate the fact to the Secretary, Hindu Mahasabha, Delhi.

3.—An Appeal to Hindus.

"The Mahasabha invites the attention of Hindus all over the country to the second object of the Sabha, namely the promotion of goodwill and friendly relations between Hindus and the followers of other faiths in this country and it appeals to them that while they should firmly promote by all legitimate and honourable means the objects of the Hindu Mahasabha, namely to organise and educate their co-religionists, to protect and promote their religious, cultural, social and, where necessary, political interests or to refrain from doing anything which may be reasonably calculated to retard the growth of an united Indian nation or to give any reasonable ground for complaint to members of other communities inhabiting this country.

4.—Patuakhali Satyagraha.

"This Mahasabha expresses its sympathy with the suffering of the Satyagrahis of Patuakhali who have been sent to jail for asserting in a peaceful manner their right of taking out processions with music on a public street. The Mahasabha trusts that the Hindus of other parts of India will lend every legitimate support to their brethren of Patuakhali to enable them to continue their Satyagraha until their right is fully vindicated and recognised.

6.—Hindu Hill Tribes.

"The Mahasabha draws the attention of the Hindu community to conversions of Hindu hill tribes to other faiths which has been going on on a large scale in Assam, Bihar, Chota Nagpur and other places as well as among Hindus of East Bengal resulting in deplorable decline of the Hindu population in the said areas.

This Mahasabha appeals to Hindus to take a lesson from well-organised missionary efforts of Christians and Mussalmans and to organise and strengthen Hindu missions to check the tide of these conversions and to promote religious, social and economic advancement of Hindus in those places.

7.—Organisation of Hindu Sabha in Assam.

"Resolved that steps be taken to organise Hindu sabhas in every district and sub-division of Assam to carry out the objects of the Hindu Mahasabha.

8.—Special Session at Hardwar.

"Resolved that a special session of the Hindu Mahasabha be organised to be held at Hardwar for purposes of propaganda during the coming Kumbha fair and an attempt be made to enlist the co-operation of energetic and self-less sadhus and sanyasis to carry on the work of the Mahasabha throughout India."

THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE

All-India Christian Conference

MADRAS—THE 28TH DECEMBER 1926.

The 13th All-India Conference of the Indian Christians commenced its sitting on December 28th in the Wesley College Hall, Madras under the presidency of Rai A. C. Mukerjee Bahadur. There was a large gathering of Indian Christians present including the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Devadoss and Mrs. Devadoss, the Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur R. N. Arokiasami Mudaliar, Mr. Arokiasami Mudaliar of Pondichery, Dr. Asirvada Nadar, Prof. S. E. Ranganadham, Messrs. V. Chakkarai, P. Chenchiah, R. N. Danapal Mudaliar, K. W. Rama Rao, Balasingam Satya Nadar, J. E. Hensman, J. J. Hensman and Sivasubramaniam of Bangalore.

Welcome Address.

Dr. Asirvada Nadar, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the gathering. In the course of his speech he said :—

“As you are all aware, the Montford Reforms are given to us from the year 1920, and from the beginning of their introduction an unhealthy communal feeling was aroused among the people resulting in communal hatred chiefly between Brahmins and non-Brahmin Hindus and sapped the national unity and strength. Our community has not actively joined any party and there has never been any fracas between Christians and non-Christians which, I think, is due to the fluid of peace and harmony running in the veins of Christians—our heritage. This year a healthy independent party—moderate nationalists—has come into existence and every one has great expectations from the party. Under the present reforms our community is given only five seats in the local Legislative Council, for the whole province which is divided into five groups for this purpose. Of these electorates one is mostly a Catholic, another is a Protestant and in the rest the number of Catholics is predominating. If therefore our Catholic brethren do not have forbearance and equity there will be returned in every election one Protestant and four Catholics. But it is gratifying to note that this year in the Tinnevely and Ramnad group our Catholic brethren have shown the above virtues and returned Mr. Daniel Thomas, a Protestant. To avoid this unpleasant inequality between the two sections a compact was made in the year 1920, but to our misfortune it was short-lived. In the tenth Conference which was held in Bangalore a resolution was passed urging the Indian Christian Associations in the Madras Presidency to take early steps for rectifying the causes which are likely to lead to a very unhealthy growth of sectarian feelings in the community itself, and the Conference appointed a Committee for the purpose. But I am sorry to say that though three meetings were convened our Catholic friends did not respond to our invitations. Last year the Indian Christian Association of Madras corresponded with the Catholic

Association requesting them to come to some amicable settlement with regard to elections recently held in the presidency and after their deliberations in Tanjore last December they wrote to say that any resolution passed by that body concerning elections would not be binding on their electorates. This year a Protestant gentleman came forward as a candidate for the Central group, that is, Madras, and after a few months, through some mystical power he suddenly dropped the idea. Apart from my desire to have equitable advantage alternately for each section of our community I wish to avoid the unnecessary waste of money which our community can ill afford, and other unpleasant consequences of a heated election, by establishing a compact between the two denomination and unanimously nominating three Protestants and two Catholics in one term and two Protestants and three Catholics in the second and so on till we are given at least six seats when we can have an equal number of seats if we should possess the same virtues of equity and forbearance. This act of ours will not only set an example to others but will also draw admiration from them. In this respect this time both the Congress and Justice Parties in the Madras City maintained regular discipline among their respective partymen. No more than four candidates in each party contested the seats. Instead of their taking a lesson from us we have to take one from them. Having had a bit of experience now, I hope, we shall do better when further instalments of Reforms are given to us after 1929. If no mutual agreement be possible at all we shall have no other alternative than to move the Government to grant us permission to contest in the general election with reservation of seats in five or six major groups or centres instead of communal electorates. This system has no doubt some difficulty of adjustment of the Christian voters but I do not think it is an impossibility.

"Our share in the political life of the country has not hitherto been very active. Apparently we have carried out to the very letter the teaching of our master:—"Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself". It is comforting to report that there have been no Hindu-Muslim differences in our Province but on the other hand both the great communities move very friendly. The leaders deserve praise and we trust that other Provinces where the unhealthy differences exist would follow their splendid example. It is a matter for regret that in their nation-building efforts the other communities seem to consider our community as a negligible factor. I should think that the fault is not on their part but our own. Our early moral and religious training, our tenets, our private and public probity and the fact that we occupy a middle station between the western people who have influenced our life and faith, and the eastern to whom we belong by reason of our birth and upbringing, and are therefore in a specially advantageous position for reconciling and co-operating the conflicting ideals of the two sections and interpreting the one to the other, all stand in our favour to serve in a Ministry of friendship and reconciliation. I should like therefore that we enter into the national regeneration of the country and be a guiding principle from its infancy. If we do not join the rank now but sit quiet with folded arms, when the fishes and loaves are distributed we shall have no claim. As our Lord has said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven." We shall illumine the country and be also the Ambassadors of peace and good will.

"On the evening of the 18th instant some of us ventured to present an address couched in terms of Christian fellowship and a copy of the English Bible to Sriman Srinivasa Iyengar on the eve of his departure to Assam as President-elect of the Indian National Congress, fully realising that in the enormous task he has undertaken, his responsibilities are great and that he is in need of sound wisdom from the one who is all wise, all powerful, and the creator of the universe, visible and invisible and according to our faith, experience and knowledge that such a being is no other than the true God we are worshipping and praying to that he may direct him in all his deliberations and place him under the guiding principles of the book.

The Problems of Community.

Some of the problems confronting us are the Indian Church Measure, the remarkable Union Movement of the South India United Church and the South African Indian problem. But as these are in worthier hands we need not go into their details. As for the South African question we receive daily re-assurance from the press of an early happy settlement by the Round Table Conference. Our economic and un-employment question is so serious that it must be left in abler hands to be grappled with. But I may be permitted to touch upon one aspect of this question as affecting our community. Most of our young men after their University career prefer entering the services to walks of life. Some at least should, I think, take to agriculture trade or other industries, in the prosecution of which their education would no doubt be a great help, and they would then be a source of improving the material prosperity of the community. I should also touch upon one of the disabilities which the so-called self-supporting churches in South India are labouring under. For some reason or other as a post-war retrenchment, or to extend missionary labours in other unexplored fields or to internal dissensions at home due to higher criticisms and consequent shortage of funds there, almost all missionary societies have made considerable cuts in their monetary support towards missionary work in India and the worst sufferer therefrom is the Church Missionary Society in Madras. The step taken by the Parent Society is somewhat premature and the stoppage of support except that of a few special gifts from endowments for purely evangelistic work among the non-Christian tells much upon our ordinary work. The congregations here were either not prepared or are too poor to cope with this unexpected responsibility which they have been taxed even beyond their capacity. We cannot make retrenchments without seriously affecting the efficiency and sphere of work. Another hardship which our members are experiencing from the authorities of Christian Colleges and Schools is the forced retirement of several experienced and able teachers who have spent almost their lifetime as teachers as soon as they attain their 55th year of age even though they are quite healthy, efficient and fit physically and mentally. For a minor community like ours to come forward or at least to maintain its own position, backing up from influential quarters from outside and push on the part of our members are required. I am sorry to say that we do not possess these advantages to any appreciable degree. But it is comforting to know that when our men and women enter into any walk of life they by their tact, manners, private and public character, gain the approbation and confidence of their employers and the public. These qualities coupled with other special

advantages which our community possesses should, I think, encourage them to take part in all public activities.

MR. R. N. MUDALIAR'S SPEECH.

Welcome address over, Mr. Balasingam Satya Nadar read the messages of sympathy and then requested the Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur Arokiasami Mudaliar to address the gathering.

In responding to the request, the Hon'ble Mr. Arokiasami Mudaliar said he was glad to be present at the Conference and to give public testimony to his conviction that for the uplift of the Indian Christian community in the Southern Presidency and elsewhere, it was absolutely necessary that all Indian Christian denominations should join forces and work together on a common platform. (Applause.) So far he was aware, it had not been the case. He did not propose at that meeting to start an analysis of the reasons that had operated against that desirable union. But he was sure of this, that possibly certain sections of the Indian Christian community had been scared away by the belief that that was more or less a set of religious convention in which they were afraid of taking part. If the objects of this Conference were widely known and if it was divided into different sections—political, social and so forth, it would not be found impossible to secure the hearty co-operation of all sections of the Indian Christian community in matters affecting their welfare. They were all aware—and the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee made it plain—that there were many matters in which they had to work in common. For one thing, the Government treated all sections of the Christian community as one unit for political purposes, and if only for political purposes, it was necessary that they should unite and work together on a common platform. Besides, there were social questions as, for instance, the uplift of the depressed classes. They were aware that among the Christian communities there was a large section of the so-called depressed classes and the problem of their elevation must occupy the attention of the whole community and particularly a Conference of this character. It might be possible to secure the co-operation of various denominations if the Conference divided itself, as the Indian National Congress had done, into various sections.

The question of a pact between Roman Catholics and Protestants among Indian Christians was a difficult one. It was attempted once before and it failed. He was not sanguine that it would be possible to establish a convention of the sort which the Chairman of the Reception Committee was referring to. The fact that certain communities were in a majority in certain electorates must tell on the ultimate results and there were associations of Roman Catholics or Protestants who could give a lead. Even if they were able to create associations, which could authoritatively settle the candidates and enforce its mandates, he was not sure they would at all be near the solution of the problem of arriving at a pact. But he was not without hope. It would depend on the work which the workers of the associations would be able to put forth.

Speaking on the communal electorates, the speaker said :—

One other point has been referred to by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, the question of communal electorates. Even as a private individual, I am prepared to express here my strong conviction that we of the Christian community have lost tremendously by the creation of these separate

electorates. (Cries of hear hear). We have lost tremendously in political importance. In point of number we form but a small group and having absolutely no voice in the election of the majority of the members of the Legislative Council, we have sunk to the position of absolute insignificance. It seems to me that when the time comes for the revision of the present electoral system, it will be the duty of Indian Christians to press for a vote in the general electorate, it may be with reservation of seats for Indian Christians, till such time when by the development of national consciousness we could get on without separate representation.

Gentlemen, there are various other questions which have been referred to in the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee. But my object in consenting to say a few words to you, was, as I said, to give public expression to my conviction that it is necessary that all Christian denominations should unite together for common purposes."

The Presidential Address.

Rai A. C. Mukerjee Bahadur was next installed in the presidential chair. The following is the text of the address delivered by him : —

"We meet for the second time in Madras after a lapse of 12 years. It was the session of the Conference that was held here in the year 1914. Since then we have met twice in Bengal, Bombay and the United Provinces each and once in Orissa, the Punjab and Central Provinces. Even after thirteen years of existence we have to confess that our body is far from being strong. The Conference is worthy of better support. Its object being to promote the well-being of the Indian Christian community one would think that the very enunciation of the object would draw under its banner all the various members forming the community. One has to confess however that except perhaps in my own Province, the United Provinces and the Punjab, the bulk of the community has shown great apathy towards the movement. Whether it is due to lack of knowledge about it or whether it is due to an absence of propaganda on its behalf throughout the length and breadth of the country, or whether again it is due to a want of appreciation of the possibilities which lie at the base of such a movement, I am not able to say. Perhaps all these various causes are more or less responsible for this unhappy situation, for true it is that our leaders have not shown that amount of earnestness in making this body strong and really representative of the feelings of the community which is expected of them. They still appear to be unmoved. One great cause of weakness, we sincerely deplore, is that with the exception of a few public spirited individuals here and there—and their number is very small—the great Catholic community has, as a body, held itself aloof from the All-India Conference. The Conference is most anxious that this community should also be united with us. Neither we nor they can separately speak in the name of the Indian Christian community. In spite of all our differences, and whether we are willing to recognise each other or not as members of the same body, there is not the slightest doubt that we are members of one community and that we either rise or fall together. We do not discuss religion or articles of belief in these Conferences. We discuss things which work for our solidarity and for the uplift, social and economic, of the members of our community, and that ought to appeal to Catholics and Protestants alike. Such aloofness does not exist among Europeans and Anglo-Indians in this country.

They in their Associations all unite and work together, Protestants and Catholics, alike. Why not we ?

Need for Co-operative Effort.

Ladies and gentlemen, the time spirit demands that we should combine. These are days of union and of co-operative effort. I have not much knowledge of conditions in the South, but I do not suppose that the conditions would be very different from the North where various communities have felt compelled in their own interest to form Sabhas and Samajes, and these have contributed considerably to the strength and uplift of their communities. Kahatriyas, Kayasthas, Marwaris, Sikhs and even such depressed classes (please remember they are not all untouchables) as the Ahirs, Kurmis, Barbers, Chamars etc., have organised themselves into Sabhas and Samajes and these are doing an immense service in removing social evils, in enforcing duties, in asserting rights and in adopting measures for the uplift of their members. It is an encouraging feature to find that whereas no heed was paid as long as demands were urged by individuals, people are gradually educating themselves to concede to demands when they are made on behalf of a whole people. The struggle may be short or long but there is no doubt that if there is justice and righteousness underlying a cause success is assured. Let the lesson of the historic Satyagraha at Vaikom not be lost. Vaikom is not and cannot be a solitary instance. Such Vaikoms help to educate the public conscience and it is that which we so earnestly desire to see.

Christians and Politics.

Ladies and gentlemen, this leads me to the consideration of a much bigger problem, a problem which has not claimed that amount of attention which it deserves, namely, that we cannot remain aloof from the body politic. We cannot afford to be indifferent to those aspirations which are inspiring the Indian nation in these days. Not unjustly has the charge been levied against us that we Indian Christians have in a way cut ourselves off far from the main body of India and have constituted ourselves in an absolutely wrong sense into a 'peculiar people,' an 'elect race'. What I said in reference to the Catholics and Protestants applies with ten-fold more strength to Christians and our non-Christian countrymen, for here also, we either rise or fall together. It is true that constituted as this Conference is we are not an out and out political body. We attempt to unite Indian Christians irrespective of their political beliefs. Persons holding extreme political opinions, whether Swarajists or Liberals or Conservatives, all have a place and work in our conferences. At the same time, I submit that it will be a great mistake to make the Indian Christian Conference with its limited object and its comparatively restricted outlook to be the be-all and end-all of our existence as a community. While working for our own social and economical uplift there is no reason why we should not share in that larger life, the national life which concerns us all, Christians and non-Christians alike. Our members are perfectly free to ally themselves with any school of political thought with which they find themselves in sympathy. I would go further and urge on them that it is their duty to take their full share in the country's deliberations in matters pertaining to the nation's progress. Use your own judgment. Follow the lead of those whom you can trust but follow them intelligently and thoughtfully. Do not be afraid to ask them questions. Do not be afraid to press

on their attention your own points of view which you conscientiously hold. But the chief thing is let us not be indifferent to our country's progress. We certainly do not desire—do we?—to be content with being hewers of wood and drawers of water in our own country. We certainly desire that India should have her rightful place in the commonwealth of nations and not merely be a suppliant begging at the doors of other peoples and show as if we would feel grateful for any crumbs that may fall from their tables. We may have to fight for it: we may even have to suffer for it. Let us be prepared for both. And here may I say to those in our country who to-day in regard to the Government seem to be out for a fight, that we shall gain more by co-operation than by non-co-operation, more by fighting constitutionally than by an out and out obstructive policy. Whatever may be the opinions held by the enactors regarding their own conduct, I believe that these walk-out methods have not only been fruitless but have really given the bureaucracy the chance to do things in their own way. Their action is more like the acts of children. What we need is to put up a fight, a strong fight in our legislatures and if we fail to achieve our object let us keep at it and a time will come when reason will prevail. No one can deny that there has been progress. There was a time when power was entirely in the hands of the bureaucracy. Is that the case now? And who can say that the change will stop here? Let our goal be clearly the same level as the other self-governing colonies and dominions. Nothing short of this will satisfy us. But the mere use of high-sounding words and phrases like non-co-operation, obstruction and the like is not going to take us to our goal. We have to remember that the Englishmen is a hard-headed and unimaginative person and he can only see things through the eyes of cold reason. It is up to us to convince him that we are in deadearest and one of the ways by which we shall be able to prove it is by not neglecting to build from the bottom. Let us not neglect the nation-building part of our programme.

Inter-communal Unity.

"It is where the true spirit of democracy is wanting we have such woeful disasters enacted as we have seen taking place in various parts of the country. In the North we have had open fights and bloodshed. In the South we have the manifestation of bitterness of feeling among class and class. It seems to me that we Indian Christians ought specially to feel the challenge that comes to us from outside to help to bring about that spirit of friendliness, of brotherliness which our Lord inculcated when he charged us to love even those who hate us and pray for those who persecute us. I am sure even though his onslaughts were directed against our community as much as against Mahomedans, yet let it be said to our credit that we Christians have not manifested the temper and feeling which the Mahomedans have done and we Christians deplore the tragic death of Swami Shradhdhanand at the hands of the wicked assassin. The cause of religion cannot be served by such means. We must all stand for freedom to worship in the way we desire but for that very reason we should be ready to concede to those who differ from us the same freedom that we desire for ourselves. What did Swami Shradhdhanand do more than Mahomedans and Christians are doing every day. I sincerely trust and pray that the Hindu community will not lose its head over this tragic event. This terrible catastrophe ought also to serve as a call to the leaders to try and examine themselves. Have they done anything to foment such feelings, not intentionally perhaps? We all

know that enormities have been committed as an indirect result of the actions and utterances of leaders. Let us each set our own house in order. But let us not stop there. We are out to build up a nation. Let the leaders teach those that trust them and profess to follow them that it is not by violence that a nation can be built up.

"Have we done anything to heal the sores of our country or have we not rather been content with crying 'peace' 'peace,' when there is no peace or, worse still, have been indifferent to events taking place outside? You remember what a powerful appeal Mrs. Sarojini Naidu made to us, Christians, when on the invitation of certain Christian friends in Calcutta she addressed them. She put the searching question to them, "What have you Christians, the Messengers of the Gospel of love, what have you done to heal the wounds of discontent, of racial animosity, of bitter communal strife? What are you doing now at the present critical moment for Mother India?

"We Indian Christians must respond most heartily in the midst of such tragic happenings to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's appeal.

Upliftment of Converts.

Having pleaded for the solidarity of the community, the President went on to say :—

"Again we have to remember that we are daily receiving accessions to our numbers and the greater proportion of these come from classes to whom opportunities for making progress had been denied. Many of them are poor, they are uneducated, their outlook on life is very narrow but all the same they are members of our community. Do we owe a duty to them? On account of the vastness of their numbers unless we are careful to raise their condition they will surely drag us down. Just think of this. There was a time, before the so-called mass movements had begun, when we were ahead of any other community in India in education. But we no longer occupy that position now. There was a time when the community stood lowest in point of crime. With the accession of large numbers of men and women from among the criminal tribes of India we can no longer boast ourselves of being a community free from crime. Do we want to stop their coming in on this account? By no means. We are out to preach deliverance to the poor and release to the captive, whatever be the nature of that poverty or captivity. It is for us to help to uplift the masses in our community and if we become pioneers amongst our own people we shall show the way to the rest of India. We do thank God for the Gospel of Jesus Christ which points out the way not merely of our own salvation but also the salvation of society of the nation. This will call for no small amount of sacrifice. We are called upon to think how best we may bring about the amelioration of our community. We must examine, for example, whether the system of education now in vogue is best calculated to help this class of people. Whatever the causes that may have led to it, the present system of education, unrelated as it is to the life of the people does not really help them. Our system is hidebound and allows no room for the experimentation of new methods. Our funds are low and we look to grants to help us run our schools but the system on which Government distributes its grants-in-aid binds us hand and foot to follow the Government curriculum and that curriculum at its best is not calculated to meet the requirements of the people. What seems

to be an urgent reform is that Government should relax the rigours of its education code and permit grants-in-aid to be given to those who are willing to try new methods and new experiments.

Call to the Youths.

In the best interest of our Christians in areas where mass-movement into Christianity have taken place, those who have the charge of our people ought to forego, if necessary, the Government grant and introduce better and modern methods of education among them. Christian missionaries have been the pioneers of English education in India. There is need here for pioneers and we ask them to be those pioneers. Let there be fewer schools if need be, but let them be schools where something real, something substantial, something more than mere numbers of passes may be attempted even with the loss of a Government grant. And here is also a call for our young men to give their best for their people. We often hear the cry "back to the village." But that cry will remain a cry in the wilderness unless the best talents among us go to the villages and devote themselves to raising the standard of life among our villagers. What is being urged here is actually being done in other countries where young men with good degrees are content to live a quiet life in the village teaching in a village school or acting as pastors in village churches and raising it to such a state that people find all that they desire in their own village. The village becomes a cultural centre.

Communal Representation.

The members of our community ought to come forward and claim seats on Municipal and District and Taluk Boards, on the Legislative Councils and the Legislative Assembly. This brings me to the consideration of the vexed question of communal representation. I have already said that I do not like the term 'community' because of its unsavoury implications. It seems to me that it is the adjectival form of the word which is more open to objection. This term has been misused and it is that which has produced certain very unhappy results. What do we mean when we use the terms? Do we want to put into it the connotation which, for example, the Mahomedans or the party known as the Justicites put into it that in all public appointments we should maintain the principles of communal representation, that each community should have a fair share of the loaves and fishes of office. I hope not. In fact, I feel sure that as a body we do not mean that, for it will be an awful thing for any country if this principle is carried out. We want the best men to occupy positions of responsibility irrespective of whether they are Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis, Sikhs or Christians. We cannot approve of such action as the Mahomedan party for example made itself responsible for when one of its leaders had the effrontery to telegraph to His Excellency the Viceroy that the Mahomedan community would resent if a certain appointment which had been held by a Mahomedan was not again given to another Mahomedan. We congratulate His Excellency the Viceroy that he had the courage to reject such a suggestion and he hereby did justice to a member of our own community who had proved his worth by long years of highly creditable service. We do not want this sort of communalism at all. A fair field and no favour is the principle which should be kept constantly in view. But if by communal representation is meant that in our legislative and other administrative bodies such as

Municipal and District and Taluk Boards the voices of minorities should be heard, why then, the demand is not unreasonable. As things unfortunately are in India, religious prejudices are often appealed to in departments of life where these prejudices ought to have no place whatsoever. I have spent a considerable portion of my life in public service where I had actually to deal with questions of elections and so forth. And again and again have I witnessed passions being stirred through unhealthy means. One candidate is a Hindu and it is the duty of Hindus to support him. Another is a Mahomedan and the Mahomedans must rally round him. So and so is a Kayastha and all Kayasthas must stand by him. Is that a fact or not? Why even leaders like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai have been going about persuading people to return only such men as would promote Hindu interests. Is this not a most unhealthy condition of this? Fortunately for us, our community is so small that even if we had the desire—which I stoutly maintain we have not—we could not promote the interest of our community to the prejudice of other communities. What we do desire is that in the counsels of our country, our voice, the voice of a minority occupying the third place on the score of population, should also be heard.

In conclusion, the President said:—"Let our position not be misunderstood by our fellow-countrymen. The rule by majority is liable at times to go wrong. Did it not do so when England passed its Education Act some years ago which violated the rights of Non-conformists? That law had to be amended. What chance is there for the voice of minorities being heard unless some means or other is devised whereby they could be heard?"

Resolutions.

The following resolutions were passed at the second day's sitting of the Conference on the 30th December:—

1. — Swami Shraddhananda's Death.

This Conference views with profound horror and indignation the assassination of Swami Shraddhananda and appeals to the leaders to continue their efforts towards bringing about a better understanding between the Mahomedan and Hindu communities. It emphatically condemns the abuse of religion for purposes of political and communal propaganda.

This Conference further requests the President to convey to the bereaved family of the Swami their sincere condolences.

2. — Nomination to the Executive Council.

This Conference expresses its profound disappointment that since the introduction of the Minto-Morley Reforms no member of the Indian Christian community has been appointed to the Executive Council of the Government of Madras and having regard to the fact that the Indian Christian community is an influential minority community and has in its ranks a number of competent men, urges on the Government to recognise the claims of the Indian Christian community for representation in the Executive Council when the next vacancy arises.

3. — Communal Representation.

While looking forward to the time when the development of the national consciousness may justify the abolition of the system of separate representation, this Conference is strongly of opinion that a representation of the Indian Christian community on the various legislative bodies in the country is absolutely necessary.

This Conference recognises that the right of representation by election has been conceded to the Madras Presidency. It regrets however that the claims of the other Provinces in this respect have been ignored, and in the case of the Central Provinces representation

even by nomination has been denied. This Conference therefore urges on the Government the recognition of these claims also.

In the Presidency of Madras the right of election by a special electorate has been recognised, but the experience of the last three elections has revealed certain grave defects in the system. This Conference therefore urges that in the Madras Presidency as well as in the other Provinces seats may be specially reserved for Indian Christians to the extent of 10 in the Madras Legislative Council and 4 in each of the other Provincial Legislative Councils and 4 in the Legislative Assembly and Council of State each, but that Indian Christian voters be brought on the same roll as the non-Mahomedans, the requisite number for each body being returned by the votes of the general non-Mahomedan electorate.

This Conference further empowers the All-India Council to formulate a scheme at an early date in the light of the foregoing resolution after consulting Provincial Associations and leaders and submit the same to the Government.

4. — Educational Report.

(a) This Conference urges on the Government and Missionary bodies that in order to make education profitable to the villager and beneficial to the country it is necessary that a scheme of village and district industrial and vocational schools where village industries are taught on improved lines along with the elementary education be established and that, as a beginning, model industrial schools be started at suitable centres immediately.

(b) This Conference protests against the abolition of the concession of half fees for Indian Christian Girls in schools and colleges in the Presidency of Madras and urges the restoration of the old system and further prays that in the matter of stipends for teachers' training a uniform standard be introduced for all classes in the Presidency of Madras."

5. — Home Industry.

(a) This Conference earnestly advocates the introduction of Home Industry such as spinning weaving, basket-making, lace making, etc., into the homes of the Indian Christian community.

(b) That a small committee be formed consisting of J. R. Sivasubramanian (Convenor), Dr. A. C. Asirvada Nadar, Mr. C. F. P. Zacharias and Mr. C. R. Bhaktul with power to add for the purpose of working up this scheme and presenting a report thereon to the All-India Council.

6. — Co-Operative Credit Bank.

With a view to improve the material prosperity of the Indian Christian community, to encourage thrift among its members and to help them in their financial difficulties and trade enterprises, this Conference urges on the local Association to form and conduct an Indian Christian Credit Bank on lines fitted to their local conditions, and to report from time to time to the Conference the progress of the scheme.

(b) That a small committee be formed consisting of Mr. A. C. Asirvada Nadar (Convenor), Mr. J. M. Sivasubramaniam, Mr. S. Ambrose, and the Rev. Dr. V. J. R. Asirvadam and Mr. V. Chakkarai with power to add for working of the scheme and submitting a report to the All-India Conference.

7. — South African Problem.

This Conference is awaiting with anxiety the deliberations of the Round Table Conference now sitting at Durban and devoutly hopes that the ultimate findings of the Conference will do adequate and full justice to the claims of Indian residents in South Africa.

8. — Prohibition.

This Conference considers that the total prohibition of sale and manufacture of alcoholic liquors and other intoxicating drugs, except for scientific and medicinal purposes, as soon as possible, should be the definite goal of all temperance legislations in the country. It is gratified to learn that a resolution to the effect has already been passed by the Legislative Assembly. It calls upon the Christian members in the Assembly and the provincial legislatures to give unstinted support to any efforts that may be made to push forward this object.

After a few closing remarks from the President, the Conference closed with the benediction.

EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE

All-India Muslim League

DELHI—THE 29TH DECEMBER 1926.

The 18th session of the All-India Moslem League was held on the 29th December in the afternoon outside the Ajmere Gate, Delhi in a spacious and profusely decorated pandal. The attendance including about 80 delegates was in the vicinity of 500. Among the distinguished participants were Sir Abdur Rahim, Sir Mahomed Iqbal, Sir Mahomed Abdullah and Sir Rahma Bux.

The Welcome Address.

The ball was set rolling by Khan Bahadur Pirzada Muhammed Hossain, Chairman of the Reception Committee, who in the course of his speech said among other things :—

“ It is only (a) when we are accused of planning restoration of Mussalman rule in India which we take to be an astute move on the part of interested parties to subject us to suspicions of the rulers and concomitant disadvantages, (b) when we are denied our fair share in the Government of the country, (c) when we find hypocritical plea of efficiency raised by Hindu friends to maintain their monopoly of offices, (d) when we find that the majority community is carrying on an intensive campaign for communal organisation in the hope of establishing Hindu Raj in India, it is but human that we should think of protection against such aggressiveness.” Continuing, he said that they must all strive to build up a composite culture, a happy and progressive Indian (as distinguished from Hindu) nation which should draw upon what is best in each of the several cultures which have found their way into the country.

Music Before Mosques.

With regard to the question of music before mosques, he said that the Government had taken a correct view of the problem in such questions and settled it by executive order. Had the Hindus followed Mahatma Gandhi's advice and left the question of routes for sacrificial animals to be determined by the goodwill of Mussalmans and not asserted an aggressive attitude, this minor issue would never have arisen. By abandoning the correct attitude suggested by Mahatma Gandhi and following a course of provocative aggressiveness, Hindu zealots had themselves postponed the settlement of this issue. Now that the question had been reduced to insistence on civil rights, once again the executive decision of the Government puts the contending parties in correct position ; but he would once again draw the attention of the Indian Mussalmans to the advisability of maintaining a perfectly calm atmosphere for the exercise of their rights which must not be tainted by resentment.

Muslim's Constitutional Demands.

If India was to be a self-governing dominion of the British Commonwealth and a representative system of Government suited to the genius of the people was their goal, each constituent of the Indian Empire in federal development or otherwise must know the exact position of India. Neither unanimity of purpose nor prosecution of a common object could be possible without it. A clear statement of Muslim demands based on accepted principles of representation and self-determination must be placed on record for the acceptance of both the Government and other constituents of the Indian Empire. He suggested for discussion with this question in view the following changes :—

1. Each compact group with common interests bound by ties of common religion, language and culture (as far as possible and practicable) should be parcelled out into separate provinces to determine its own future in harmony with the larger common interests of the entire continent. Present distribution of provinces had a history of haphazard development behind it and had no rational basis to rest upon.

2. All Provinces must work out their destinies as far as their distinct interests were concerned and contribute their share in common to the Central Government.

3. There should be proportionate representation in the legislature and services.

4. An irreducible minimum of representation in legislatures by Mussalman elected by exclusively Mussalman constituencies should be guaranteed.

5. Proportion of Muslim seats in the Provinces where they are in a minority would automatically be solved. When suggestion No. (1), was given effect to it was only fair and just that where any community was in an effective majority it should retain its effective power and where it was in an ineffectual minority, adequate safeguards should be provided to protect its legitimate interests.

The basis of co-operation with either the Hindus or the Government, said the speaker, was the recognition of the irreducible minimum of Mahomedans' constitutional demands. He deplored the differences of opinion between Muslims over foreign politics which unfortunately and unwisely was being done in India.

In view of the forthcoming Royal Commission of 1929, he considered it most appropriate for the League to issue an invitation to the Central Khilafat Committee and other organisations claiming a representative character for the formation of a coalition for the purpose of the formulation of the demands of the Muslim community to be placed before the Commission. Should the Indian National Congress find it worth its while to call a Round Table Conference for the purpose of exploring the possibilities of forming a constitution acceptable to all the communities, the League should hold itself in readiness to respond to its invitation. Finally, he expressed grief at the loss of Swami Shraddhananda.

Mr. M. A. JINNAH, the outgoing President, next invited Sheikh Abdul Quadir to take the chair and reviewed briefly his connection with the League from 1919 when he was first made President. Mr. Jinnah, in introducing Sheikh Abdul Qadir to the audience, said that the latter was a man who

distinguished himself in various branches of life and rendered great services to the community and the country and the speaker had no doubt that Mr. Quadir would guide them right and under his presidentship the League would successfully go through this session.

Presidential Address.

Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Qadir then rose to deliver his Presidential Address. In the course of his speech he said :—

First of all both the Congress and the League should each put its own house in order and try to bring within their respective fold all the sheep that had gone astray. Then they should both sit together and devise ways and means of acting in harmony wherever possible and of agreeing to differ in a friendly way, when such differences become inevitable. Having accomplished this, they should stand together before the coming Commission on Constitutional Reforms and make a united and vigorous demand for complete reforms. In the meanwhile, as a preparation for that, they should work hand in hand in the spheres of intellectual, economic and industrial progress.

Late Swami Sharddhananda.

The speaker next denounced Swami Shradddhananda's dastardly murder. There were many Mussalmans who differed with the Swami's religious propaganda, but he was sure they would be as sorry as others to find that a co-religionist of theirs should take it into his head to put an end to his life. No man could render a greater disservice to Islam or lend a stronger impetus to the Shuddi propaganda than he had done by this foul deed.

Communal Representation.

Touching communal representation Mr. Abdul Qadir argued for increased representation of Moslems in the Assembly and the Councils and other public bodies, and opined that the best solution of this problem would be to retain separate electorates till there was a mutual desire to give them up, or till any particular local area asked for a joint electorate. The question of employment under the State he proceeded was not merely a question of loaves and fishes but a question of power, opportunity and of training. The vitality of this question gained still greater force in the case of Mussalmans because some other avenues of work, particularly in the line of trade or commerce, were practically beyond the reach of most of them for want of sufficient capital.

Continuing, Mr. Abdul Qadir advocated expansion of Tanzeem and Tabligh movement, and concluded by advising agriculturists to further the co-operative movement which had been remarkably successful in the Punjab.

Concluding, he said that he would have liked to touch upon two questions which he considered were very important. Those were the South African question and the Sandhurst Committee, but he hoped that after the questions were thrashed out by the Subjects Committee and were brought before the League he would, if necessary, express his personal views on them.

The Honorary Secretary's report for the year 1926 was then adopted and the proceedings were adjourned till next day.

Proceedings and Resolutions.

2ND DAY—THE 30TH DECEMBER 1926.

Seven resolutions were unanimously passed when the League re-assembled on this day. The attendance slightly improved upon that of the previous day. The first three resolutions expressed grief at the demise of Nawab Imadul Mulk Syed Hussain Bilgrami, a Muslim leader, Mr. Khawaja Yousuf Shah, member of the Moslem League, and on the murder of Swami Shraddhanand and the consequent injuries inflicted upon a Moslem who died later on.

4.—Indians in South Africa.

Sir Abdur RAHIM then moved the fourth resolution which deplored disabilities under which Indians in South Africa were already placed by anti-Indian legislation and regretted the proposal for fresh legislation which if sanctioned by the South African Parliament, would make the position of Indians intolerable in South Africa. The League earnestly hoped that the proceedings of the Round Table Conference now in progress would result in a just and equitable settlement and the establishment of friendly understanding between India and South Africa, removing the cause of the most serious conflict between the two countries.

The mover said that it was inadvisable to utter anything which would tend to strain the relations between Indians and South Africans and thus make the work of the Round Table Conference difficult. Their attempt should be to smooth and pave the way for favourable settlement of the question. He, however, was of opinion that a favourable settlement might be arrived at and the serious and disgraceful disabilities which were imposed upon the Indians in South Africa removed, and no one could deny that justice required that they should have all the rights of citizenship which other South Africans enjoyed. Concluding, Sir Abdur Rahim said :—"We cannot allow our men to be treated as so many primitives."

Mr. Malik Bakrat ALI supporting the resolution, trusted that the Round Table Conference would find an acceptable solution of the most serious question.

Mr. Syed HABIB, said that in the Imperial Conferences it was repeatedly uttered that there was no colour differentiation amongst the inhabitants of the various British Dominions. This was only in theory and not in practice. Englishmen wanted that the Chinese should allow them to live and trade in China. They wanted this from a foreign country, but they could not vouchsafe the same privilege to a section of the people of their Empire. He was, however, inclined to think that the Round Table Conference could never succeed. If it did not he would demand of the Indians to rise to the occasion by doing some practical work.

The resolution was then put and carried without opposition.

5.—Muslim Representation in Government.

Mr. Mirza ALI moved the next resolution which emphatically declared it necessary that there should be adequate Muslim representation in the Central and Provincial Governments in India and demanded that, wherever such representation did not exist at present, the defect should

be made good at the earliest possible opportunity. The mover opined that unless Mahomedans were properly represented in the Cabinet of the country and unless they had their proper representation in the higher services, it would not be possible for them to make that advance which was their right to make. He declared with emphasis that Muslim efficiency was second to none. Therefore, if they were given chances to hold higher offices, their efficiency would as a natural course increase.

The resolution was carried amid acclamation.

6. — Ministry in the Punjab.

Mr. Din MAHOMED moved the penultimate resolution which deplored the absence of a Muslim from the Punjab Ministry and registered the necessity of having at least one Muslim Minister in the transferred departments of the Province. He explained how, in spite of an adequate number of seats in the Punjab Council being allotted to the Muslims, the Hindus managed along with the Sikhs to form a majority. Thus, it was impossible for the Muslims in the Council to either defeat the Hindus or the Government. Therefore, they were in a very weak position. Thus, it was incumbent upon the Government to safeguard their interests by appointing a Muslim Minister. He alluded to the interests of the Muslims being sacrificed by the outgoing Ministry. In this connection, he instanced the appointment of five non-Muslim Indian medical servants from the Punjab. He recommended that out of the two Ministers one should be a Muslim.

Sir Abdur RAHIM said that when as many as 36 men of one community made a unanimous demand that a representative of their community should be in charge of one of the portfolios in the transferred departments it seemed to him that the Local Government would find its hands forced to recognise the demand. The law was sufficiently elastic and the Governor could appoint a Muslim Minister in addition to the two already existing. Then it would be far better as the three communities of the province namely Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims would be represented in the Ministry. He was sure that Sir Malcolm Hailey would not like the experiment of Bengal being repeated in the Punjab.

Dr. Safa-at Amed KHAN said that his argument in favour of the appointment of a Muslim Minister was not one of loaves and fishes, but it was that of the restoration of the confidence of a community in the Government. He therefore trusted that no one would object to the resolution which when put was carried unanimously.

7. — The Bengal Detenues.

The last resolution on this day urging the Government to release the Bengal detenues or to put them under trial without further delay was moved by Mr. Chagla of Bombay. Mr. Chagla said that in England the question of elementary and fundamental rights of the people was regarded as most sacred, yet it was denied in a part of its Empire. There was not a single responsible organisation in the country which had not put forward this demand. In defence of their action, the Government have two reasons. One was that since the detention of these prisoners dacoities in Bengal had disappeared. His reply to this was that the argument was the most dangerous one. The Government could the next time arrest all the leaders to

do away with communal strifes and yet put forward the same argument. The next argument was that no one would come forward to give evidence against the detainees. This difficulty existed in other countries, including England; but they had not detained men in this way. British politicians wanted Indians to co-operate but to their dis-appointment they did not find many co-operating with them. The Swaraj Party was not for obstruction. Let the Government either release the detainees or give them a chance for trial.

Mr. Mahomed Yaqub said that there was a large number of high officials in the C.I.D. who enjoyed fat salaries from public money but they had not been able to make up a case against these detainees. This showed that all the boast of efficiency of the department was a farce.

The resolution was eventually carried without dissent and the meeting adjourned.

3RD DAY—THE 31ST DECEMBER 1926.

The League reassembled for the third time on the 31st December in the morning and adopted four resolutions. Attendance was smaller than that of the previous day but a large number of prominent Mahomedans were present.

8.—Sandhurst Committee's Report.

Maulvi Mahomed YAKUB, moved a resolution urging upon the Government the necessity of publishing the report of the Sandhurst Committee with a view to giving the Legislative Assembly an opportunity to consider it in the Delhi Session and trusting that the Government would take early action in the direction of accelerating the Indianisation of the Army.

Mirza Itjaz Hussain of Delhi, in supporting the resolution, said that Mahomedans were more concerned about Indianisation of the Army, because they were more fit for this kind of service. The resolution was carried unanimously.

9.—The Statutory Commission.

Mr. Malik Barkatali of Lahore next moved that the Muslim community should be properly represented on the Statutory Commission when it was appointed. The mover, in a long speech, dealt with the necessity of the appointment of a Muslim who could command confidence of the whole community. The resolution was passed without much discussion.

10.—Reforms for N. W. F. Province.

Mr. Abdul AZIZ next moved a resolution urging on the Government to introduce reforms in the North-West Frontier Province immediately. The mover said that in the India Office and in England, a wrong notion was spread that the inhabitants of the Province were Afridis. This was entirely wrong. He took an opportunity of explaining to Lord Morley that it was not so. He pointed out that such demand was made by the Muslim League, the Assembly and other organisations more than once; yet the Government had not taken any action. The people of the North-West Frontier province, he emphasised, were in no way inferior to the inhabitants of any other province. They were on the other hand remarkably superior in physical strength.

Mr. Sayid Kaim Shah, in supporting the resolution, said that the inhabitants of the province in general and Kashmir, in particular, would not be satisfied if the reforms were not introduced forthwith. He maintained that they were not inferior educationally to any other province. The Punjab was not prepared to take them in. Therefore the only course was to fight for Reforms.

Mr. L. K. Hyder said that it was not desirable to amalgamate the province with the Punjab. There must be a frontier province. He referred to the notion amongst certain people that if Reforms were given to the province they would look beyond the Khyber pass. This he said was entirely wrong. If ever there was a province in which there was homogeneity of language, religion and race it was in the North-west Frontier Province. Therefore from all points of view it was the only province for Reforms. Another argument put forward by the opposition was that the financial position of the

province was not sufficient to withstand any foreign invasion. Defence he said was a non-provincial question. It was an All-India question and should not be expected to be met from the finance of any particular province.

Sir Abdur Rahim said that as there was unanimity of opinion amongst the Muslims that the Frontier Province should get reforms, he hoped that the Government of India would consider the question carefully.

Malik Barkat Ali of the Punjab and Mirza Ali Mahomed of Bombay voicing the sentiments of their co-religionists in their respective provinces emphasised the necessity of giving reforms to the North-West Frontier Province immediately. The resolution was eventually put to vote and carried.

At this time the League adjourned for lunch, but met again in the afternoon when some important business was transacted and the meeting was adjourned *sine die*. The most important resolution of the session was moved by Mr. M. A. Jinnah as follows :—

11. — The Reforms and Representation.

"That the All-India Muslim League has repeatedly defined its position with regard to real advance in the future constitution of India in its sessions in 1923 and 1925 and reaffirms the resolution passed at its session at Aligarh in December 1925 to the following effect, namely, that whereas the speedy attainment of full responsible Government is one of the declared objects of the League and it is now generally felt and recognised that the conception of Swaraj should be translated into the realm of practical politics; and whereas it is the declared policy of the British Government also to enable the people of India to take a decisive part in the moulding of their own destinies which is marked by the declaration of August 1917 and the enactment of 1919 which formed a definite epoch in the history of India as a herald of the time when India will possess full autonomy and will rank as an equal with the Dominions and with the United Kingdom itself as a member of the British Commonwealth;

"The All-India Muslim League is of opinion that the present constitution of India must be amended and urges that for this purpose the Government should undertake a revision of the Government of India Act 1919 and without any delay, appoint a Royal Commission to formulate, after due enquiry and investigation, a scheme so as to place the Indian constitution on a sound and permanent basis with provisions for automatic progress to establish full responsible Government in India and thereby secure stability in the Government and willing co-operation of the people;

"Provided, however, that for any scheme of the future constitution of India, the All-India Muslim League reaffirms and unequivocally declares that the following basic and fundamental principles must be secured and guaranteed namely, (1) All legislatures of the country and other elected bodies be constituted on a definite principle of adequate and effective representation of the minorities in every province without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or to an equality; (2) representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present provided that it shall be open to any community at any time to abandon its separate electorate in favour of a joint electorate; and (3) the territorial re-distribution that might at any time be necessary shall not in any way affect the Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal, and North-West Frontier Provinces; (4) full religious liberty, that is, liberty of belief, worship, observances, propaganda, association and education, shall be guaranteed to all communities; (5) no bill or resolution or any part thereof shall be passed in any legislature or in any other elected body of three-fourths of the members of any community if that particular body oppose such a Bill or resolution or part thereof on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative such other method is devised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such a case.

"The League hereby appoints a Committee of the following gentlemen as the Central Committee in order to formulate a scheme so far as possible in consultation with a Committee or committees that may be appointed by other political organisations and to report the same to the Council of the League for the consideration of the League and for submission to the Royal Commission when it is appointed. The League also appoints provincial committees with power to add to their number to prepare and define a scheme of future reforms to be submitted to the Central Committee for their consideration."

[The following are the members of the Central Committee referred to above: (1) Mr. Jinnah, (2) Sir Abdur Rahim, (3) Mr. Abdul Aziz, (4) Sir Mahomed Shafi, (5) Sheikh Abdul Qadir, (6) Maulvi Mahomed Yakub, (7) Sir Ali Imam, (8) Mr. Mahomed Hussain and (9) Sir Abdul Qayyum.]

Mr. JINNAH, in moving the resolution, made a long speech. He said that the resolution laid down as the first proposition that the League desired that the Government of India Act 1919 must be amended and that a definite advance of a democratic character must be made. The Mahomedans were not in agreement with any policy of non-cooperation with the Government nor did they sanction the policy of obstruction or of making the reforms impossible. From the last elections, it was clear that the Muslims wished to work the Reforms for what they were worth. They were anxious to see that their future position in the country was thoroughly defined and secured.

Reverting to the Lucknow Pact he said that it was not made by their request. The initiative came from the National Congress: although there were differences of opinion, he thought that the Pact was the finest temporary solution of the difficulties. He then referred to the Congress point of view on the subject of the Mahomedan position in the country and said that it was far from assuring. No responsible Congressman or Hindu leader had come forward with a concrete proposal with regard to the future of the Mahomedan community. Individual pronouncements were, however, made by one person or other; nothing definite was forthcoming. There was no escaping away from the fact, communalism did exist in the country. By mere talk and sentiment it could not be removed. Nationalism could not be created by having a mixed electorate. The history of Canada showed that a separate electorate system did not prove an obstacle in the progress of representative government. He earnestly appealed to the leaders of the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha to accept the hand of friendship and fellowship of the Mahomedan community, to meet, confer and exchange views in real seriousness to find out a solution. A resolution to the effect which he was moving to-day was sent in 1924 to the Secretaries of the Congress, but no encouraging reply was received by the League. He appealed to the Muslims and Hindu leaders to let the past be forgotten and the hatchet be buried and meet in a spirit of friendship and fellowship for formulating a common demand. "We desire nothing else but justice and fairness and I assure you that if we, the two communities, can settle our differences, it will be more than half work for responsible Government won. But if, unfortunately, there is going to be a failure and it is our misfortune that we cannot come to a settlement, the next course open to the Mahomedans is that we must prepare our case for placing before the Royal Commission and fight the battle." If the Royal Commission did not satisfy the Mahomedans, they could carry their struggle to the highest tribunal. They would maintain that a principle which was sacred and was a matter of life and death to them must be secured; but he hoped that there was brighter future for the Moslems. He hoped that better minds amongst the Muslims and Hindus will realise that the only course for India was to work in friendship, harmony and co-operation. He hoped that India would rise to that nationhood for which they were aspiring.

A number of speakers then voiced the same sentiment as that of Mr. Jinnah. Dr. Kitchlew said that once the principle of the resolution was accepted by the Hindus, all mistrust amongst the two communities would disappear. On account of their numerical strength, it was for the Hindus to rise to the occasion and by pleasing the Muslims to win their hearts.

Sir Abdur Rahim said that it was impossible to imagine that the Muslim community in India should be satisfied with being relegated to a position of political insignificance under any Government. With regard to the question of the electorate, he said that the principles which were applicable to the conditions in England or other Western democratic Governments were not applicable to the peculiar conditions in India. In some quarters it was stated that Mahomedans returned to the Council through separate electorates were less patriotic and nationalist in outlook. He instanced the case of Bengal and said that the fear was an erroneous one. Mahomedans in the Councils were as earnest set of workers in the case of political advancement of the country as anybody else. If representative Government was required in the country, it was only essential that separate electorates should be continued. Otherwise the Legislatures would no longer be representative. A Government official exercised great influence on the progress of his community. If seventy million Mahomedans were denied a proper share of the administration, it was not possible for them to protect their interests and to advance their cause. Concluding, the speaker emphasised that it was the unanimous desire of the community to have adequate representation in the services and have their own electorate.

Three more speakers expressed their views and the resolution was eventually carried amidst cheers. The proceedings of the League then came to a close.

THE ALL-INDIA

Political Sufferers' Conference

GAUHATI—THE 27TH DECEMBER 1926.

The All-India Political Sufferers' Conference met at Gauhati on the 27th December under the presidency of Dr. B. N. Dutt. Mr. N. C. BARDOLOI, Chairman, Reception Committee, in his address of welcome, said:

"My dear fellow sufferers, ladies and gentlemen, I extend my heartfelt welcome to you to Assam in this Pandunagar whereto we have come to attend this annual meet which not only serves as the main meeting ground for all independence-loving men of India but also serves to keep alive the only organisation which is expected to be the future Parliament of India, namely the Indian National Congress. But we meet here to-day under the shadow of a great calamity. Swami Shradddhanandji is no more. A man with keen eagle eyes, distinguished erect figure and straightforward and sincere nature, he is still before my mind's eyes. The man whom ten Gurkha bayonets could not touch at Delhi was struck down by the hand of Caine. A thrill of horror and sorrow has passed through the whole of India and it affected little Assam also. However, let us remember that inscrutable are the ways of Providence and God in his infinite kindness might have inflicted the greatest pain with a view to cure a continuous and galling pain. Our greatest concern is that a great sufferer and a brave soldier for the country's freedom has gone out of our ranks leaving us weaker and poorer. Let me also express our profoundest sorrow at the death of the great Chittaranjan who was always the friend, philosopher and guide of the political sufferers. I believe in my heart of hearts that the Indian National Congress has got a definite meaning since the Non-co-operation movement. However much I may differ from any of the parties which now compose the Indian National Congress, my only ambition is that I shall boldly and forcefully put forward my views and fight for my ideals and if I fail and the majority wills otherwise, I shall obey the will of the majority as the views of the country just as they do in England or any other free country.

"In the history of this nation, there was only one period when the whole of India was practically united by a common ideal and practically carried everything before it in their non-violent onslaught and that was in 1921. All honour to the great saint of the century, our revered friend and leader, Mahatma Gandhi. Times have changed since then and are changing fast. Practical ideals are now dead stones or fossils. But the main idea running through all is that we should free our motherland from the evils of a bureaucratic government. There are many amongst us who were perfect No-Changers in 1921, but who have changed to-day to Swarajists or Reponsivists. What does it matter? The sufferers have proved by their suffering that they are striving for independence. The great *Paramatman* free and we as small particles of the great infinity must be imbued

with his virtues to some extent. The whole inner being is crying for freedom, the whole nature is pervaded with the ideal of freedom. Can it be considered for a moment that there is a single individual amongst us to-day who does not want to be free? In striving for these ideals, if one has suffered, it is the suffering of a patriot, a real soldier's. Nobody should complain of his suffering. It is the proud privilege of humanity to suffer for the good of mankind. So, my friends and fellow-sufferers, I pray of you never to complain or to parade your sufferings before others. I find that many a weak brothers get embittered by their sufferings when they see wordly-wise men making up their piles of gold and when they called them mad men. True it is that there are many a political sufferer worried and wounded in heart in their struggle for existence. But the wonderful thing is that whenever opportunity arises, it is they who rush to suffer afresh. The band of selfless sufferers are small and scattered and I believe that this organisation of political sufferers will make it possible for them to know each other and to keep up a spirit of camaraderie just as a spirit of camaraderie must exist in the army for efficient working.

"I understand that the principal aim of the organisation is to help them in every possible way. The honourable President-elect will give you a lead regarding the conditions of the political sufferers and I hope he will give you a lead as to how best to help them. I find to my great pleasure that many a political sufferer, free from the worry of securing Government employment, has taken to trade, commerce or other callings. Some of them are doing very well. Indeed, their examples ought to be followed. There are some again who have taken to the production of Khaddar and spinning, simplifying their habits and striving to fulfil the ideals of Mahatmaji. In the excitement of 1921, the charkha found great favour with the masses because it was generally associated with the idea of paralysing Manchester and thereby forcing the Government to come to terms. But shorn of this excitement, Khaddar has now steadily increased in production and it is now being worked as a means of economic salvation of the country. I cannot think of anything better than this for the political sufferers. Charkha spinning and Khaddar business is now a practical business proposition. I leave it to you to decide whether it should not be made one of the primary duties of political sufferers to take to Khaddar work. I do not propose to inflict my political opinions on you any more but I do hope that this Conference will give you a clear and definite lead as to the duties of political sufferers and how best they can help each other and be helped by the public".

The Presidential Address.

Presiding over the Conference, Dr. Bhupendra Nath DATTA pleaded for constructive work among the masses of India by organising them on an economic basis so that passive resistance could have some force and they would be in a position to challenge the alien bureaucracy. Otherwise exciting them through religious passion and goading them to civil disobedience would only make them food for British cannon. So far the Indian national movement was a class movement, a movement of the middle classes fighting against the domination of the British middle class over India. It was wanting to get control of the means and instruments of production in India in its own hands; failing in it, at least to have

a share of it in the exploitation of India's wealth. The non-co-operation movement having got the masses in their hands, accepted the policy of direct action and the tactics of social revolutionaries of the west. The non-violent non-co-operation policy with its tactics of hartals, satyagraha, civil disobedience etc., when divested of their Hindu phraseologies and translated into international political terminologies, were known as nation-wide general strike, passive resistance, sabotage, boycott, mass action and direct action. All these were tactics of occidental revolutionary parties but the frenzied mass energy broke loose at Malabar and again at Chauri Chaura. The revolutionary middle class leaders got frightened out of their wits in seeing the spectre of revolution which they had helped to conjure up and capitulated at Bardoli and as a result, the off-tide of non-co-operation began. The Indian bourgeoisie alone had proved itself to be important to wrest freedom from foreign masters and the new phase of asking the masses to join in politics had been ushered in. But all honour to those of them who had suffered for their revolutionary political activities and for ushering in the new phase in Indian politics.

"We are poor nameless untouchables and like the story of Achilles and the tortoise the wrath of the alien bureaucracy follows incessantly our heels. Yet we have still dynamic energy left in us which will be of some service to the cause of freedom. Up till now, the masses of India have been exploited for the benefit of the bourgeoisie. The feudal aristocracy has eliminated itself from the arena of the fight for freedom. The bourgeoisie which wants to wrest the political power from its alien rival sought the aid of the masses to gain their object. The Indian bourgeoisie wants to end the struggle with the rival by a round table conference and time is not distant when the bourgeoisie in getting what it wants will withdraw itself from the alien rival and the struggle for national liberation. Rather it will join hands with its rival in exploiting the masses in order to have a share in the means and instruments of production of India. It therefore behoves the workers for freedom to work with this social class and organise them instead of being agents of armchair politicians."

Proceeding, the president urged the necessity for starting a fund to alleviate the sufferings of the families of their comrades and help the needy sufferer. As one who had recently returned from exile, the president pleaded strongly for the exiles. To his opinion these exiles, instead of living a dog's life in India, could be of better service to India from abroad. In every country where they lived they could open our cause to help Indians in every way to establish friendship with the nations of those lands. Such attempts had been made in the past by the exiles both in Germany and America but without help from the motherland they could not do much. The future of India lay in being a part of international politics and in order to enlist the sympathy of other countries, the Indians must do extensive foreign propaganda there.

As for the release of our comrades in Indian jails, there must be country-wide propaganda. Indian people did not dwell in bar libraries and in chambers of commerce but in factories and fields. They must mobilize intellectuals for the service of the masses. Political sufferers know they were poor, but it was the poor people who had always ushered in new eras in the history.

Work before the Conference.

The task before the conference was as follows:—"All the political sufferers should be knit together into one unit and an All-India association of theirs as the nucleus of a new movement must be formed. In order to train the workers a school must be founded in a suitable place where they will be trained in history, political science, theoretical and applied sociologies, social psychology, economics, civics, etc. After being trained in these arts and imbued with the psychology of the proletariat, they should go to that toiling masses and work amongst them. The field and factory workers and the toiling masses in general should be organised in labour unions. A detailed plan of it can be matured later on. In order to start a new movement amongst the broad masses of the people, a propaganda department has to be established. Books expressing new ideologies and an organ of the movement will have to be given out. Co-operative movement in all its aspects, viz., credit societies, consumer's societies, agricultural loan banks, agricultural co-operative societies must be started which will be of great help to the chronic poverty-stricken masses. The unemployed intellectuals can take up this work with profit, for we will have to appeal to the people to support this people's movement and a fund has to be raised to meet all these expenses. A "paisa" fund ought to be started for this aim. Taking these things as the minimum programme in our hands, let us go amongst the masses and organize them. We must realise it for certain that the battle of India's freedom shall never be won in the councils, in the assemblies and by demagoguery."

Resolutions.

The following resolutions were adopted by the Conference :—

(1) Resolved (a) that in order to keep a record of the national movement the provincial organisations of the Hindustani Sangha do prepare detailed lists of all political sufferers in their respective provinces and submit the same to the All-India office before 1st (?) 1927, (b) that funds be raised to help the needy and deserving political sufferers and their dependents in accordance with the recommendations of the Executive Committee.

(2) With a view to strengthen the masses of the country and remove their crushing poverty this Conference exhorts all Indians to use as far as possible only Swadeshi things for their daily requirements and to confine their requirements to things made in this country.

(3) That this Conference exhorts the people of India to face all kinds of injustice and oppression with weapons of determined passive resistance.

(4) That this Conference immediately begins organising field and factory workers and the employees all over the country.

(5) That this Conference sends its greetings to the British proletariat and asks their co-operation in the common cause of freedom from all kinds of exploitation.

After appointing a provisional committee with Mr. Purushottamdas Tandon as Secretary, to frame necessary rules for the organisation and another committee to collect funds to give effect to the first resolution the Conference was dissolved.

Constitution.

When the resolutions of the Conference were being discussed, Mr. Shaikat Ali wanted to know positively as to what was the constitution of the conference. He further added that unless or until they could know the constitution it was difficult to ascertain whether the conference was pro-Congress or anti-Congress. The Conference appointed a committee to formulate a constitution.

SECOND SESSION OF THE

All-India Volunteers' Conference

GAUHATI—THE 27TH DECEMBER 1926.

The second session of the All-India Volunteers' Conference was held at Gauhati on the 27th December under the presidentship of Pandit Motilal Nehru. The President of the Congress, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mr. Horniman, Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali and Mrs. Gandhi attended.

Mr. Kuladhar CHALIHA, in welcoming the delegates to the Conference, said in the course of his Address: "Discipline is the guiding principle of all volunteers and they must be ready and willing to merge all their personal predilection to that of their commandant. It would be useless to call oneself a volunteer unless one is punctual and thorough in his work. It has been brought to the notice of authorities of several Seva Dals that in some places threat to strike and refusal to take food are the most embarrassing situations in which the commandants were placed by their volunteers whose guiding principle should have been to put up with all inconvenience in the matter of food, raiment and accommodation. As volunteers for the national and social cause, they must always be prepared to bear all hardships and privation, difficulties and inconveniences. The movement is a peaceful movement and so they should work in a non-violent way. Their duty is not to question why. Theirs is to do and die. Self-assertion in a soldier is a dangerous thing and a true volunteer like a true soldier should always obey implicitly.

"Service and sacrifice are the essential qualities of volunteers. We are a subject race and our sacrifice must be in inverse ratio to the degree of our subjection. Otherwise there is hardly any hope for regaining our freedom and liberty. To Mr. Hardikar belongs the credit of organising and expanding the volunteer movement and it is up to young men of India to organise on the line he has suggested. The volunteer movement is the mainspring of their national life and unless they have an efficient volunteer force they would never be able to work and Swaraj would be out of question."

In conclusion, he appealed to all to protect the national flag from all dishonour and if necessary to die for it, for the flag was the symbol of national self-respect and national pride.

Presidential Address.

After the Reception Committee Chairman's address was over, Pandit Nehru delivered a stirring speech in English. He regretted the absence of Mr. T. C. Goswami, the President-elect due to illness. The Pandit humorously said that he was not the president but was there to introduce the elected president who was behind the scene. The Pandit expressed his thorough concurrence with the beautiful speech of the President of the Reception Committee and said

that the latter had put in a nutshell the duties of volunteers to the country. The immediate cultivation of an *esprit de corps* was required among volunteers without which no service could be rendered to the country. He said that the volunteer movement was yet in its infancy, but the day was in sight when it would take the form of a regular trained army. He urged that with the exception of arms required for the military, there should be nothing wanted in the Indian army of volunteers. No country had ever achieved freedom without sacrifice and if Indians wanted freedom, sacrifice should be their motto.

Continuing, the Pandit regretted at the harrowing happenings in the country which, he said, had taken a dangerous form in the assassination of their revered leader. The mischief required to be nipped in the bud. The Pandit was of the belief that the day would come when they would be able to replace the police by volunteers for which a perfect organisation was necessary. Concluding Pt. Nehru said: "Volunteers, remember you are soldiers of unity. You must girdle up your loins to restore unity. You are the future army of India."

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, the Congress President, next distributed the prizes to Karnataka volunteers for enlisting 15,000 volunteers. Mr. H. K. Krishna won the first prize for enlisting 1,800 members.

Two resolutions were then passed in five minutes. The first urged the opening of branches of Hindustani Seva Dal in all towns, districts and provinces and requested the Congress organizations to help in that matter. The second appealed for financial help. Maulana Shaukat Ali, Messrs. Harisarvottam Rao, Rajendra Prasad and Mrs. Perine, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naroji, spoke very briefly on the resolutions.

Mr. A. Swali of Burma donated Rs. 500 on the spot. With a strong appeal for funds by Maulana Shaukat Ali and usual thanks to the chair the meeting dispersed. All business was over in an hour. Mr. Goswami's short presidential address was read by Mr. Harisarvotam Rao. The following is the text:—

Mr. Goswami's Address.

Delegates, Volunteers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The composition of a Presidential address to the Volunteers' Conference for the second year in succession, I find, is a difficult task. It is not merely a literary difficulty; it is the difficulty of one who in inaugurating a new year has also to render an account for the old year. The honour—which I prize as beyond my deserts—of being called upon to assume the responsibilities of another session of the Volunteers' Conference is embarrassing; for I feel I have to submit myself not only to considerable self-examination but also to a public verdict on my tenure of office as President of the All India Volunteer Board during the year which is about to close. And, after all, I am not able to present to you any glowing record of proud achievements. Our efforts have been humble; the measure of their fruition has been even humble. But the infant movement is getting out of its swaddling clothes and its lisping speech. It is learning to struggle against inclement circumstances; It has begun its conscious struggle for existence; its appeal is in louder tones and in accents more distinct, determined to have the ear of India; it is acquiring strength of body and mind by waging contention against forces of disruption and the decay of our national solidarity.

As I began by telling you, we are unable to offer you proof of concrete achievement. Yet, if you look around, you will, I am sure, endorse our claim to those intangible results which are not the less valuable because they elude ocular grasp or because they can be argued out of dialectic existence. The message of our movement has reached the furthest ends of our country and has provoked thought in

evidence and says high prices have to be paid for articles that are smuggled into the jail. Cash is received by prisoners from their homes for their requirements in the jail by means of money orders to warders and their subordinates. The Committee understands that system of money-lending also is well established inside the prisons, there being, however, a strict code of honour among the prisoners to return the money. Gur (jagree) is in great demand and there is such a craving for it that the prisoners are prepared to pay for it many times its real price. Other luxuries, such as "ghee", tobacco, butter, fruits and liquor are also obtainable. Gambling is conducted under the patronage of the minor jail officials, who, no doubt, are not forgotten by the winners. Discipline is merely superficial, for one witness, whose evidence there is no reason to distrust, assured the Committee that sovereigns were plentiful inside the Lahore Central Jail, though unprocurable outside. He had himself seen a prisoner in possession of £80 and had kept in his box a sum of £40 for another.

The Punjab Government find no reason to differ from the general conclusions arrived at by the Committee in respect of unauthorised punishments and indulgences. They have issued through the Inspector-General of Prisons a warning against these offences, but the Government recognise that radical measures for improvement of the supervising and executive agencies are necessary in order to improve this aspect of prison administration.

Income per Convict.

Referring to the Committee's finding that the income of the Jail Department works out at Rs. 10 per annum per convict, a figure incompatible with the theory that each prisoner is doing his fair share of a day's work, the Government quote statistics of prisoners doing various kinds of work and point out that the number engaged on manufactures was 36 per cent. of the total and the proceeds during 1924-25 showed a profit of just under Rs. 60 per prisoner employed. Moreover, the prisoner is a less willing workman than the free agent. It is a principle of jail administration that jail labour is to be employed first on jail requirements and next on requirements of other departments of the Government. Notwithstanding all these and other factors the Inspector-General has been asked to consider the introduction of new and economically advantageous employments in consequence of the opening given by relaxation of the old rule regarding machinery. Now machinery may be used for certain industries. These facts show, according to the Punjab Government, that the Committee had not been placed in full possession of the whole case on this point.

New Jail for Frontier Convicts.

Referring to overcrowding of jails, the Committee points out that the provision of further jail accommodation is imperatively necessary. The Committee understands two new jails are under contemplation and, therefore, urges that one of them should be specially reserved for Frontier convicts whose segregation in a separate jail is highly desirable.

The Government says that financial pressure, only now relieved, has up to the present time made it difficult to contemplate remedial measures on an effective scale. Funds have now been provided by the Punjab Government for the commencement of the new Central Jail outside Lahore and arrangements are contemplated for the rebuilding of the existing group of jails in Lahore in a modernised form. It is understood, says the Punjab Government,

that the Government of India intend to construct a Central Jail at Ferozepore for the accommodation of the prisoners of the North-West Frontier Province, of whom some 700 or 800 now occupy space in the Punjab jails.

The committee has expressed adverse opinions on Central Jails, except for habitual offenders, on the ground that their size is unfavourable to supervision and to reformative influence and has advocated the confinement of non-habitual offenders in district jails with the maximum accommodation of 500, but the Punjab Government, for the reasons given by the Indian Jails Committee, has decided not to accept the advice of the Punjab Committee and are quite satisfied that it is undesirable to have more than 1,500 prisoners in any jail and will, as opportunity presents itself, erect additional buildings and make constructional changes.

Deputy Inspector-General of Prisons.

The Committee then lays stress upon the importance of the appointment of a Deputy Inspector-General of Prisons so that the Inspector-General might be free for important duties and particularly for inspection.

The Government agrees that at a time when large changes in the department are being considered and carried out it is not possible for the Inspector-General unassisted to combine his heavy headquarters duties with sufficiently frequent and detailed inspection. They have therefore decided on the creation of a post of Deputy Inspector-General for two years, at the end of which period the necessity of the continuance of the appointment will be further considered. Similarly, the Government think that it is desirable to appoint whole-time Superintendents to each district jail and to limit the duties of the Civil Surgeon to medical charge. The Government is taking steps to provide for the appointment of Civil Superintendents and hope that during the current year at least six District Jails will have such officers.

In regard to the Central and Borstal institution, the Government is under an obligation to employ officers of the Indian Medical Services as Superintendents. This obligation, however, does not extend, in the opinion of the Government, to additional institutions as and when created, and subject to the agreement of the Government of India, the Punjab Government contemplate after the existing obligation to employ a certain number of I. M. S. Officers has been met to appoint whole-time Civil Superintendents to the Central Jails and institutions which it is not necessary to earmark for the purposes of that obligation, with whole-time assistant surgeons for medical charge.

The Government are sure that the appointment of whole-time Superintendents must not be made a ground for reducing the strength of the executive staffs under them. The Government do not therefore contemplate any reduction in the strength of executive staff subordinate to Superintendents. On the other hand the Government recognise the necessity of extensive changes in the personnel and of bringing under reduction those jailors, deputy jailors and assistant jailors, who are not definitely held to be fit for promotion. The manner in which it is proposed to ascertain the object in view is to introduce a Bill for the amendment of the Prisons Act for the abolition of jailors, deputy jailors and assistant jailors and their replacement by Deputy Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents of a better status and somewhat higher pay than the class which they are to supersede. Those who are not found fit for promotion to the new rank will retire under the provisions of Sections 426 and 436 of the Civil Service Regulations.

Convict Officials.

The Committee then turns its attention to the system of appointing convict officials and concludes that the system has become a great source of corruption and that the best interests of jail administration demand its total suppression. The Government say they have given anxious thought to this question because the quality of paid warders who must replace convict officials must be beyond doubt but the Government conclude that in principle the employment of convicts should be brought to an end and have already given orders for the reduction of a number so employed to the figure of March, 1919, as soon as arrangements for replacing the number reduced have been worked out.

The Committee, dealing with the arrangements for inspection by non-official visitors, points out that the existence of non-official visitors is valuable as supplying a training ground where numbers of the public can obtain an insight into jail problems. No doubt there have been instances in which visitors grossly abused their position by going to the extent of persuading Sikh prisoners to refuse conditional release offered by the Government, and also lecturing them on political matters, but there should be no wholesale condemnation because of the faults of a few. The Government generally agree with these observations and have no doubt that many non-official visitors seek to do their duty conscientiously and have therefore impressed on the authorities concerned the desirability of making satisfactory selections. It is important that all officers of jails should treat non-official visitors with courtesy and considerations. The non-official visitor is an ally of the Superintendent in keeping the administration of jails pure and above reproach. The Government have given orders for the preparation of schemes in all jails for the substitution of animal or mechanical traction for manual labour on wells.

The Committee has put forward an interesting proposal for the adoption of a system under which the profit arising out of the performance of tasks is credited to the worker as a reward for good work, coupled with exemplary conduct. The Government had already decided on crediting a portion of these earnings to prisoners in habitual jails and provision was made for this in the budget of the current year. It has been decided, however, that payment should be made to the prisoners only upon release, whereas the Committee's proposal is to allow those who have earnings at their credit to make small purchases of certain articles from time to time. This principle could no doubt be extended to allowing them to make remittances of money to their homes. The Inspector-General is in sympathy with this proposal.

The Committee makes several recommendations regarding diet and cooking, and points out the desirability of having separate kitchens for Mahomedans and Hindus. The Government have given instructions to the authorities concerned regarding the history ticket, etc, and point out that modern rules have already been incorporated in the jail manual for specially constructed interview rooms at the gate in every jail and the Government have reason to believe that the period of 20 minutes laid down for interviews is not infrequently extended in practice.

B. & O. Administration Report 1924-25

"When the political history of India for the year 1924-25 and the three preceeding months comes to be reviewed, much that is hopeful and gratifying will emerge from the record of Bihar and Orissa during that period." In these words the official year book 'Bihar and Orissa in 1924-25' records the political events and activities of the different branches of administration in the province.

"At a time when the very foundations of the new constitution were being loosened in other parts of India," says the report, "this province may claim to have kept its head. Elsewhere some of the newly-elected Legislatures were exercising their considerable powers with the avowed object of bringing the Government to a standstill; in Bihar and Orissa, although the extreme section of political opinion was not unrepresented in the new Council, a different atmosphere prevailed, and that element of mutual goodwill which is essential to the working of dyarchy has not been lacking. Thus the Ministers have retained the confidence of the majority of the council, and at the same time there has been a notable absence of friction in their relations with the other members of the Government and with the permanent officials working under them.

"The trend of public opinion during these fifteen months has been no less significant. Hysterics and fireworks are out of favour, and it is no longer easy to arouse popular enthusiasm by the wholesale condemnation of Government officials and "the sham Reforms." Sanity is returning to public life, and with it a growing disposition to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by those same Reforms, and to work for a further advance on constitutional lines. The political developments of this period have not been without their disquieting symptoms; but, viewed as a whole, they make for encouragement."

Influence of Congress.

Describing the influence of the Congress on local bodies it says: "It was inevitable that this widespread capture of the local bodies by the Congress Party should be attended by far-reaching consequences. Further remarkable letters soon made their appearance in the anti-Government press, indicating a general alarm, no less at the type of politician who was thus returned to local power than at the methods by which his success had been achieved. The number of old members who had secured re-election was very small, and few indeed, of their successors had any administrative experience. Immature youths fresh from college, paid lecturers of the Swarajist Party, "national" school masters, and persons who had been convicted under Criminal Law Amendment Act or bound down to keep the peace—all these were included among the personnel of the new District Board."

"Under these circumstances it is not surprising that a tendency soon became apparent to use these local bodies for the furtherance of political propaganda, rather than for the diligent promotion of the interests which had been committed to their charge. The same process was evident in those municipalities also which had come under the control of the Swarajists in the autumn of the previous year. Several instances occurred of addresses of welcome to extremist leaders and of congratulatory addresses presented to

politicians on their emergence from jail. Office-bearers in municipalities and district boards have made objectionable speeches during the course of public business. Attempts have been made to fly the Swaraj flag over municipal offices and the substitution of "national" holidays (such as the anniversary of Tilak's death) for those now observed (including the King-Emperor's birthday), has been gravely discussed. The employees of local bodies have been directed or "advised" to clothe themselves in 'khaddar,' and public money has been utilised to spread the cult of the "charka" in a manner which cannot possibly be reconciled with legitimate requirements of education or any other public interest."

Hindu-Moslem Question.

"Another most disquieting feature which must be recorded here is the recrudescence of ill-feeling between Hindus and Mahomedans, particularly during the latter half of 1924. Bihar and Orissa was probably no worse off in this respect than the other provinces of India, but the state of affairs was such as to give constant anxiety to the Government and to call for unremitting vigilance from their subordinate officers. To some extent this question is connected with Congress politics. A good deal of resentment was felt in Mahomedan circles at what was regarded as an attempt to convert the Congress into a Hindu organisation. The tension was increased by re-criminations which passed between the two communities regarding the alleged misapplication of Congress funds. Mahomedans were keenly disappointed at the results of the District Board elections, in which hardly any of their candidates were successful."

Industries.

After recording the sound financial position of the province the review passes on to the activities in the domain of industries. "The predominance of agriculture in the economic life of the province has perhaps tended in the past to divert attention from its industrial potentialities. Yet in Chota Nagpur is to be found one of the most important industrial areas in India. Now-a-days thousands of young men are emerging from schools and colleges every year, many of whom are compelled, while not a few are animated with a strong desire, to seek other avenues of employment than the Government service and the law. Indeed it is manifestly impossible for these two spheres of activity to absorb the growing number of the educated middle classes; and the search for a career often grows desperate. In these circumstances the increasing provision of technical and industrial education is both a political and an economic necessity. The Department of Industries was created as recently as 1920 to supervise this work more effectively, and at the same time to assist directly in the industrial development of the province. Critics are apt to complain that this department has little to show for all the money that it spends. They probably overlook the fact that about three-fourths of its expenditure is accounted for by educational institutions, and would have to be incurred under some other head, if this department were not in existence. The total disbursements during 1924-25, were not much more than rupees seven lakhs; so this does not leave much for the actual development of industries. Nor is it reasonable to look for sensational results in this direction, while the department is still in its infancy."

C. P. Administration Report 1924-25

The annual Administration Report of the Central Provinces Government for 1924-25 remarks that the period marked a further stage in the return of the Province to normal conditions and has witnessed in the field of politics a gradual return from the blind alley of obstruction to sanity and sobriety. The period as a whole indicated a fundamental disagreement between the Berar and Central Provinces Marathi and Hindi sections of party leaders of the various groups of the Swaraj Party, and many of their followers desired to accept office, but no group was powerful enough to command the support necessary for the formation of a stable Ministry. The tendency in Berar and Central Provinces Marathi districts and in Chhattisgarh was in favour of accepting office, while the northern Hindi districts were the focus of opposition to this policy.

Obstruction has never been popular in Berar, which has favoured the policy of working the Reforms for what they are worth. The next move accordingly came from Berar in the announcement of the acceptance of a membership of the Executive Council by Mr. Tambe, ex-leader of the Berar Swaraj Party.

Inside the Legislative Council the Swarajists have in other ways shown a very notable change from their obstructionist policy of 1924.

Financial Position.

The year under review was another year of continued improvement in the finances of the Province. The budget, as finally passed by the Local Government, provided for a total revenue of Rs. 531'81 lakhs, an expenditure chargeable to revenue of Rs. 521'00 lakhs, and a balance in the Famine Insurance Fund of Rs. 111'05 lakhs. The main factor that contributed to this improvement was a remarkable rise in revenue from excise, which amounted to Rs. 150'44 lakhs. The main difficulty in the financial situation is the present position as regards the working of the financial settlement between the Central Provinces and Berar. It is now decided that expenditure be divided between the two provinces in the same proportion in which they contribute to the revenues; that is in the proportion of 60 to 40.

There was a revival of communal tension, which was more acute than for many previous years culminating in riots in 14 districts of the Province. In Jubbulpore the situation was so serious that troops had to be called out, while in the town of Arvi a serious riot occurred with several losses of life. In the town of Akola communal feeling had been hardening during the preceding 12 months, and two riots took place. The immediate cause of each disturbance was dispute concerning the playing of music before places of worship.

Co-Operative Movement.

Commenting on co-operative credit the report points out that there could be little doubt that the root of the troubles which nearly wrecked the movement in the Province is the lack of education in co-operative principles. In order to infuse in every member of every society the spirit of co-operation, the Federation Congress appointed a committee which recommended the starting of primary societies with their own share capital. The Berar Institute has arranged for training classes and co-operative rallies, and for co-ordination of the activities of local industries.

Bengal Administration Report 1924-25.

The Bengal Administration Report for the year 1924-25, in narrating the events and conditions prevailing in the country during the year, reviews in detail the activities of the Swarajya party and the alleged revolutionary movement in Bengal along with other questions. Referring to the political situation the Report states that at the commencement of 1925 the relative strength of the parties in the Council, in spite of individual fluctuations, showed no substantial change from the positions won by them at the last election. The Independents, who differed from the Swaraj Party only in owing no allegiance to Mr. Das and in not being pledged to refuse office, formed with the Swarajists the permanent opposition. The Ministerialists apt to be swayed by their personal attitude towards individual Ministers, had not been, even when there were Ministers in office, consistent in their support of the Government; and the eventual abolition of the Ministry tended still further to weaken the ties which bound this group.

In the contest for supremacy the Swarajists had the great advantage of being the only force in possession of a highly developed organization backed by party funds and capable of keeping its ranks united, of procuring the attendance of its members on the occasion of all important votes, and of exercising influence over the members of other groups. The Government and Opposition forces still, however, remained very evenly balanced and voting on most issues was very close. In this situation the Mahomedan vote, capable of weighing the scales on their side, bore much the same relation to politics in Bengal as the Irish vote used to bear to English politics in the House of Commons.

Referring to the revolutionary activities the Report says :-

The activities of the revolutionary conspiracy had necessitated the promulgation of the Ordinance in the previous October, and several revolutionaries had been arrested and detained under its provisions. The Ordinance was, however, a temporary measure due to expire in April, 1925, and the Bill, which was to remain in operation for five years, was designed to take its place.

In order to make clear the full gravity of the situation with which Government was faced, it is desirable at this point to recapitulate in the barest outline the main overt activities of the revolutionaries which had led to the adoption of drastic measures for their suppression. There were two murders, two attempts at murder, the creation of a bomb factory, the issue of inflammatory leaflets announcing a campaign of ruthless assassination of police officers and the condemnation to immediate death of all who in any degree helped Government.

At the opening of the session, His Excellency the Governor addressed the Council and explained to the members the urgency of the necessity for suppressing terrorist crime in the Province. The impossibility of dealing with this menace by means other than those proposed in the Bill was clearly demonstrated, and solemn stress was laid on the truth that it was better that the ordinary processes of law should be suspended for a few individuals than that a secret organisation should be left free to threaten the lives of those whom it saw fit to call its enemies.

In introducing the Bill the Hon. Sir Hugh Stephenson adduced irrefutable proofs of the existence of highly organised, well armed and well financed conspiracy, against which almost all attempts to set the machinery of the ordinary law in motion had signally failed in the past. Finally, it was pointed out that the cases of those who had been arrested under the Ordinance had been placed before Judges, who had in every instance agreed with the view of Government regarding their complicity in the conspiracy.

Such a weight of argument produced no effect on the stolid front of the Swarajist Opposition, in whose eyes the issue was but another contest between the Council and the Government. They had already made certain of victory. At a meeting of Mahomedans, held on the previous day, Mr. Das had employed all his powers as a rhetorician to win over the wavering representatives of that community. Simultaneously an intensive campaign of intimidation against members of Council had been instituted in the Press and other means resorted to in order to procure either their unwilling support or their abstention from voting.

Leaders Removed.

Strengthened by these devices the Opposition refused even to discuss the Bill which was thrown out by a majority of nine. As there could be no doubt of the necessity of such a measure, the Bill was subsequently certified by His Excellency the Governor.

The preventive action taken by Government under the Ordinance achieved its object in so far as it removed the known leaders of the conspiracy from the sphere of their activities; and the cessation of overt revolutionary crime which followed in the wake of this action was the true measure of the urgency of the need for suppression.

The movement had, however, been merely scotched and not killed; but time was required to recover from the blow which had been dealt, to replace the old leaders by new chiefs, to refill the ranks that had been depleted. For this end propaganda was essential and the old campaign of recruitment in the Press and elsewhere was pursued with unabated energy. A flood of revolutionary articles was let loose in the regular newspapers and periodicals, accompanied by a stream of pernicious books and pamphlets. The books and pamphlets were drawn up on much the same lines as the Press articles, which will be dealt with in the second section of this summary, and took the form of denunciations of the economic oppression of the British in India, appeals frequently in the form of poems in mystic language extolling freedom, bloodshed and self-sacrifice, and accounts in eulogistic language of the exploits of the old revolutionaries.

Some of these publications were printed locally while others were imported from places outside the jurisdiction of the Government of India. In several instances recourse was had to proscription, seizure and prohibition of importation; but the majority of the pamphlets were so written that they fell just outside the definition of sedition. The object of these publications was to represent Government as satanic, oppressive and barbarous. On occasions quotations from or references to Hindu religious writings were made with a view to justifying violence and bloodshed. Appeals were addressed to the women of Bengal exhorting them to follow the example of the heroines of Rajputana and to instil into their sons and husbands a spirit of self-sacrifice on behalf of the mother-country.

Pamphlets of mischievous intent with a dangerous under-current of suggestion were published setting out in laudatory terms the deeds done by students in the movement for freedom in Russia and calling upon the young men of Bengal to do likewise. A pamphlet of this type was sold at the Conference pandal at Faridpur, and this was one of the few instances in which prosecution could be sanctioned and a conviction procured.

Traffic in Firearms.

A concise manifesto of the revolutionary party was widely circulated in pamphlet form throughout India. It contained a direct incitement to revolution giving as the immediate object of the party the establishment of a Federal Republic of the United States of India by an organised and armed revolution. The extensive method of distribution of this pamphlet was in itself ample proof of the widespread organisation of the conspiracy.

The unsettling and deleterious effect of this stream of poison on the immature minds of the students of Bengal, for whose benefit it is chiefly concocted, may easily be imagined. The results produced thereby are at least as bad as those of open revolution and as a means of spreading the contamination of sedition, it has proved itself an insidious and very potent force.

Instances of illicit traffic or of attempts at illicit traffic in arms were of disquieting frequency. A consignment of German bayonets, this time under the guise of "wood-cutters," was discovered, and there is evidence that two cargoes of arms and ammunition from Continental sources, which were intercepted at intermediate ports, were ultimately destined for Indian purchasers.

The profit to be gained by this trade owing to low Continental prices and high local demand is tempting, and there is proof that the weapons found with revolutionaries were imported by illicit means. Two persons were caught in the act of selling an automatic revolver and ammunition in Calcutta; two Indians were convicted for conspiracy to obtain illegal possession of arms from Chinamen, and an attempt was made to purchase arms from a Calcutta firm by means of a bogus order. Those weapons were clearly not intended for any lawful purpose. The dangerous character of this traffic as a method of arming revolutionaries is fully realised and every effort is being made to check it at its source.

Recruiting Campaign.

It must regretfully be acknowledged that during the year under review there has been no noticeable improvement in the language and tone of the Indian Press which, with few exceptions, shows as little sign as ever of appreciating at its true value the gift of free speech or of realising the responsibility that devolves upon it as the preceptor and mouthpiece of the people. That the castigation of Government is looked upon as the "raison d'être" of journalism in this Province is borne out by the fact that of all the papers now in existence not one purports to support Government, and that the majority do their utmost to vilify it on every opportunity. One or two of the newspapers have extended their columns to include topics of general interest; but most of them still remain narrowly political in their outlook. The advantage to be derived from the newspaper as weapon in the political arena is being fully realised and each of the parties in Council except the Independents is now in possession of organs in which they can give public expression to their views. The accessions of strength in this direction have been particularly numerous in the case of the Swarajya party which now has many papers under its control.

The Swarajist journals advocate Council entry and on this question are opposed on the one hand by the "No-changers" who favour non-participation in the proceedings of the Council, and on the other by a third group which is in disagreement both with the Swarajists and No-changers. These differences of opinion have led to much mutual criticism and acerbity of feeling between these sections of the Press.

At the beginning of the year the discussion of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill reopened in its full force the chorus of denunciation which had lulled a little after the excitement caused by the Ordinance had subsided. On this topic there was no difference of opinion and the Press was unanimously hostile, even the hitherto moderate "Sanjibani" remarking that, thanks to their sin, the British nation would be expunged for ever from the civilized world. The "Forward" gave expression to the general journalistic opinion in the passage, "The contemplated measure is a perpetual menace to our liberty, a ban on our patriotism and a carefully prepared attempt to destroy the whole morale of our movement for freedom. He will be a traitor to the country who supports it." The "Amrita Bazar Patrika" demanded to know whether the members of the Bengal Council would "share with the Government the responsibility of passing such a monstrous law utterly subversive of personal liberty."

As the Indian Press is almost entirely representative of the "intelligentsia" and the "bourgeoisie," it is not surprising that expressions of sympathy with Bolshevik theories and activities found room in papers not definitely communistic in policy, much less frequent than in the past. There was still, however, a tendency to quote Russia as a fitting example for India to follow and to refer to Sovietism as the final manifestation of Socialism. One expressed the conviction that Lenin was "a man of wonderful deeds, an intensely religious man, one of the great minded men who seek the deliverance of humanity." The Riff revolt was acclaimed both by the Hindu and the Moslem Press as the effort of an Eastern race to free itself from the Western yoke, and it was suggested that England in her desire "to wipe the Moslems of the face of the earth" would welcome the downfall of the insurgents. In spite of the emphatic declaration of neutrality by Parliament in connection with the dispute in Arabia, England was accused of secret collaboration with France and Italy in assisting Amir Ali to retake Hedjaz from Ibn Saud. England's policy towards Mosul was attributed to motives of more self-interest, and the foreign powers viewed with open sympathy.

Procedure Justified

The "Sarathi" set forth the justification of Bengal's procedure (in connection with the activities which have been discussed in the foregoing quotations from the Administration Report) in these words: "The distrust of the people must be removed. To give them such a training, the life-stories of self-sacrificing patriots must be recited to them. We may not adopt their methods. But are we not, on that account, to respect their renunciation, their heroism and their patriotism?" An account of the revolutionary movement in Bengal published in the "Basumati" contains the observation: "In Bengal of all countries the strength of mind required for unavoidable murder for the welfare of humanity or of the country is most lacking I believe that a different atmosphere has to be created and training for generations in that new atmosphere has to be undergone in order to enable Bengalis to overcome such weakness".

Enough has been written to show that contemporary Indian journalism is confining its efforts to the inculcation of a spirit of discontent, while its activities in certain directions actually constitute a dangerously powerful influence for evil.

Ministers' Salaries.

The good impression produced by the Council in its treatment of other demands was doomed to be nullified by its vote on the most momentous issue of all. On the refusal of the Council in August, 1924, to allow the demand for the salary of Ministers, His Excellency the Governor had been obliged to assume temporary charge of the training of Ministers. As, however, the training of Ministers and the testing of their capacity to administer transferred subjects are essential features of the new constitution, which, without Ministers, must to all intents and purpose cease to function, it was considered desirable that some effort should be made to bring home to the Council the real significance of the issues dependent upon its decision.

At the same time there was reason to suppose that the adverse vote on the question of salaries had been aimed not so much against the Ministry as an institution as against the Ministers then in office. In order, therefore, to procure an unequivocal expression of opinion on this question, the Government, in January, without proposing the name of any person as Minister, moved that provision for a Ministry should be made in the budget for the ensuing financial year. This motion was carried by the substantial majority of 24. When however, it came to the voting on grants, the Council, swayed by the great personal influence of Mr. Das, rejected the provision for the pay of Ministers by majority of six. The Government had therefore no other alternative than to conclude that the Council had no desire to work the Reforms.

Council President.

The immediate result of the refusal of salaries was the resignation of the two Ministers then in office, accompanied by the temporary assumption by the Governor of the administration of transferred subjects and followed, when sanction had been obtained, by suspension of transfer with effect from June, 1925, till January, 1927, when the period of the present Council is due to expire. From this it did not follow that the work of the Government was rendered impossible by the refusal to co-operate. Provision had been made for such a contingency, and the only results of obstruction are that Bengal, by the vote of her elected representatives, has for the present ceased to participate in the powers and privileges conferred upon her by the new constitution, and that this achievement will add little to the credit side of her account when her claims to further concessions come to be considered.

The next trial of strength between the parties in Council came at the election of a new President in place of the nominated President whose term of office was due to expire in August. Many candidates were in the field, several of whom, from doubt whether their chances of election would be advanced or retarded by declaring themselves Swarajists, gave rather nebulous definitions of their creed; but the real contest lay between the Swarajya nominee and a representative of the Independent party. The Swarajists used all the means at their disposal to procure support for their representative, but the Independent candidate proved successful by a small majority.

Weakening Tendency.

In spite of the victories gained by the Swarajists in the vote on the Ordinance Bill and on the salaries of Ministers, this party gave signs of being less powerful than it once had been. In the general budget debate it had been defeated on most of the issues. The campaign against the Ordinance had failed to rouse any widespread interest. Intervention in the Tarakeswar dispute had accomplished little, while it had definitely alienated the sympathies of orthodox Hindus. The long-delayed village reconstruction scheme had gone no further than the collection of funds, and had been successful only in rousing the suspicions of the landlords. All these external forces were combining to sap the strength of this group, and there were also within itself symptoms of a disease that might eventually prove fatal.

Faced by these weakening tendencies and met with a steady resistance to its demand by the Government both in India and in England, the party found it essential to make a stand against the revolutionary left wing and to attempt to win the confidence of the Government and the public by making it appear that the methods of force advocated by the extremists did not have the approval of the party.

To understand all that this decision implied it must be remembered that the strength of the revolutionaries still remained great in spite of the Ordinance, that they were well represented, although not in a majority, on the Provincial Congress Committee, and that the loss of their support would be serious. At this juncture Mr. Das opened the contest by explaining in the Press that he was prepared to adopt a constructive policy.

and to co-operate with Government on honourable terms. This in itself was not only a departure from but an actual reversal of the policy adopted by Congress in 1920, and the significance of this step was still further emphasised by an almost simultaneous denunciation of political assassinations.

Faridpur Conference

These antagonistic forces were destined to come into open conflict at the meeting of the Provincial Congress held at Faridpur in May. The first blow was struck by the revolutionaries who, at the opening of the Conference, distributed a pamphlet in which the futility of the policies both of Mr. Gandhi and of Mr. Das were exposed, with the implication that nothing could be effected except by force. In marked contrast to the violent tone of some of the speeches delivered, the address of Mr. Das gave a reasoned exposition of the creed of Swaraj and openly offered co-operation under certain conditions, even although it did carry an inconsistent sting in its tail in the shape of a threat of civil disobedience in the event of refusal of his terms. The speech met with only a cold reception (!) and it was evident that it was not to the taste of the orthodox non-co-operator. The resignation of Mr. Das and the dissolution of Congress were averted only by the personal intervention of Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Das thus succeeded in asserting his authority but his position was far from enviable. He still commanded the respect of a majority of his party, and, although his future was fraught with difficulty, there was no one of sufficient influence to challenge his position as leader.

As at Serajganj in the previous year, Mahomedans held aloof from the deliberations of the Provincial Congress at Faridpur and preferred to attend the District Conference which was held as a counter-attraction at the same time and place. The Congress was thus representative of only Hindu opinion and, although resolutions were carried advocating Hindu-Moslem unity the discussions on this, the erstwhile main plank of the Swaraj platform, elicited little or no enthusiasm. At the Moslem Conference the trend of the debate was rather in the direction of the airing of communal grievances than the establishing of mutual good-will.

Death of Mr. C. R. Das.

At this crisis in its fortunes the Swaraj party was deprived of the guidance of its powerful leader by the death of Mr. C. R. Das in June. Bengal lost in him her most outstanding figure in the field of politics, and the display of respect for his memory was by no means confined to his political followers. His death left the Swaraj party without a head, and there was no one amongst his followers likely to have general recognition as his successor. It was at such a time that Mr. Gandhi came to the rescue and maintained some semblance of unity in its ranks. From the various candidates in the field choice eventually fell on Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta who was elected both as leader of the Swaraj party and as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. To those offices was subsequently added that of Mayor of Calcutta, although the new leader had had no connexion with the Corporation, Mr. Gandhi frankly admitting that he looked upon the Mayoralty as a mere adjunct to the office of party leader.

The diminution of violent political agitation, apart from the activities of the revolutionaries, and the return to more normal conditions of political tranquillity which marked the year, were unfortunately accompanied by a growth of Hindu-Moslem distrust which at times resulted in breaches of the peace. Mutual hatred of the ruling power had been the only cementing force of non-co-operation and the considerations which led to discontent on the part of the Mahomedans eventually ceased to operate.

Khilafat Movement.

The Khilafat movement, which had been the mainspring of Mahomedan agitation, achieved its object by procuring the favourable terms granted by the treaty of Lausanne. The abolition of the Caliphate by the Turks, the action of the Wahabis in seizing Mecca, and the disputes resulting therefrom tended to undermine Mahomedan ideals based on Pan-Islamic conceptions and to divert attention from foreign affairs to internal politics. The suspicions of Mahomedans had been roused by the non-acceptance of the Hindu-Moslem Pact and by the removal of their Ministers from office. Although attempts at proselytising, a fruitful source of trouble in other provinces, were of rare occurrence, disputes regarding religious observances, which often ended in blows, were only too common.

During the 'Bakr-Id' a serious communal riot occurred at Kidderpore in which one Mahomedan was killed and many injured. At Tittagarh in April a similar disturbance took place resulting in the injury of many persons and necessitating the calling in of the military to quell the riot. In the thickly populated industrial area on the left

bank of the Hooghly further outbreaks were prevented only by the elaborate precautions taken by the police.

Instances of mutually provocative conduct during the Durga Puja were also reported from the Noakhali and Pabna districts. The question of finding a suitable grave for the body of the so-called Mahomedan 'pir' which as the result of the threatening attitude adopted to Corporation officials by certain Mahomedans, had been buried in the New Market, continued to embitter communal relations in Calcutta.

Enmity has indeed led to mutual suspicion with the result that Hindus in East Bengal and Mahomedans in West Bengal, realising the disadvantages and disabilities, inherent in their positions as numerically inferior communities, are becoming more and more sceptical of the fair promises held out by the advocates of Swaraj and are beginning to ask whether the continuance of stable Government would not be more conducive to their interests.

Referring to Indian newspapers and periodicals the report states that during the year there has been no noticeable improvement in the language and tone of the Indian Press which, with few exceptions, shows as little sign as ever of appreciating at its true value the gift of free speech.

The advantage to be derived from the newspaper as a weapon in the political arena is being fully realized and each of the parties in Council except the Independents is now in possession of organs in which they can give public expression to their views. The accessions of strength in this direction have been particularly numerous in the case of the Swaraj party which now has many papers under its control.

On occasions when communal animosity led to breaches of the peace the more responsible papers, realizing the true danger of the situation, did not hesitate to unite with the authorities in their efforts to restore calm; but others, with an abuse of privilege which cannot be too strongly deprecated, showed themselves only too willing to add fuel to the flames by indulging in attacks of a communal nature.

Several newspapers and periodicals continued to keep within the law while they did their utmost to sow the seeds of sedition by publishing appreciative accounts of revolutionaries, poems with bloodshed and self-sacrifice as their text.

In short, contemporary Indian journalism, far from seeking to emulate the standards of restraint set up by the Press in American and European countries, is confining its efforts to the inculcation of a spirit of discontent, while its activities in certain directions actually constitute a dangerously powerful influence for evil.

Madras Administration Report 1924-25

The Administration Report for the year 1924-25 of the Government of Madras was issued in February 1926. Describing the Political Situation in the country, it states :—

The political situation has been generally calm. Non-co-operation for practical purposes has ceased to exist and interest has centred on the Swarajists, whose campaign, which has been attended by a certain amount of success, has compelled other parties to take stock of their position.

Swarajist Success.

The year opened with the compromise arrived at between the No-changers and the Swarajists at Belgaum. The Andhra Provincial Congress Committee, the Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress Committee and the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee all held meetings in January and agreed to the spinning franchise. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm for khaddar was not sufficient to make the spinning franchise workable and the membership of the Congress commenced to decline. The chief interest of Congressmen began to centre in the capture of local bodies. This paved the way for the Swarajists to press their propaganda. Early in March, Mr. V. Kamadas, a Swarajist, was elected to the Council of State. In April, a campaign was started to capture the Madras Corporation for the Congress. Numerous meetings were held in different parts of the City and in spite of counter propaganda by the Justice Party and the Independents, eight seats out of ten were secured at the elections. In November, a Swarajist councillor was elected President of the Corporation and three Swarajists have been appointed Chairman of Municipalities in the mofussil. In furtherance of the policy of capturing local bodies and the Legislative Council, the Andhra Swarajya Party met in April and resolved to organise parties in each district with this object. In May, the Tamil Nadu Swarajya Party met and decided that the Swarajya Party in the local Legislative Council should form a separate group with the proviso that it might co-operate with other parties if such a step was found expedient. In July, the Tamil Nadu Swarajya Party again met and adopted the resolution passed at the General Council of the All-India Swarajya Party at Calcutta that, granted certain conditions, the Swarajists were prepared to co-operate with the Government. In September, the All-India Congress Committee met at Patna and further altered the Congress franchise and decided that Congress should henceforth function in accordance with the policy of the Swarajya Party. As a result, the Swarajists took advantage of the tide in their favour and launched propaganda to capture the seats in the local Legislative Council at the next elections.

The "Justice Party."

Sir P. Thyagaraya Chetty, who had been the acknowledged leader of the Non-Brahman or Justice Party ever since the death of Dr. Nayar in 1919, died in April. His commanding influence may fairly be said to have had considerable bearing on the cohesion of the party. After his death, efforts were made to unite the Ministerialist and oppositionist Non-Brahmans. At a public meeting, the Chief Minister made an appeal for the re-union of the party. Other leading Non-Brahmans protested their readiness to sink their differences in the common cause of Non-Brahmans. The party was recognised with a new programme of work and the Hon'ble the Raja of Panagal was elected leader of the party.

Communal Feeling.

Signs of a recrudescence of strong communal feeling in the Presidency have not been wanting. There is a nationalist school (Gurukula) at Sermadevi in the Tinnevely district. Agitation was raised because Non-Brahman boys were not allowed to dine with Brahman boys. Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu, President of the Tamil Nadu

Congress Committee, toured the country delivering speeches and at some of the meetings there were disturbances. Meetings of protest against his action were held. Some of the Congressmen rebelled and refused to send their quota of yarn to the Provincial Congress Committee. The question came to a head in April, when the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee met at Trichinopoly and decided that the shibboleth of merit based on birth should have no place in Indian social life and appointed a committee to deal with the matter. The result was a distinct split in the Tamil Nadu Congress camp. Some of the leading members of the Congress Committee resigned. However, the death of Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu's chief opponent in June eased the situation.

Press and Periodicals.

During the year 1924, there were 116 newspapers published in Madras City and 171 in the mufassal, making a total of 287 for the Presidency. Eight newspapers were published in the French Settlements of Pondicherry and Karikal. More newspapers were published in Tamil than in any other language.

The circulation of most of the important dailies published in English remained the same as in 1924. Of these, *The Hindu* has a larger daily circulation (11,000) than any other newspaper, whether printed in English or in a vernacular. Its entire circulation (including tri-weekly and weekly editions) in 1924 was more than double what it was in 1917. It is a severe critic of the Government and a vehement supporter of Indian interests, where racial questions are involved, but, apart from any question of politics, it has an excellent news service and always reports a *cause celebre*, regardless of the space involved. The *Madras Mail*, a paper largely read by Europeans, had a daily circulation of 7,000, next largest to the *The Hindu*. Since 1917, when it was at the height of its anti-Government crusade, with a circulation of 10,000, there has been a steady decrease in the circulation of *New India*. It fell from 3,000 in 1923 to 2,000 in 1924. The circulation of the *Daily Post* fell from 1,600 in 1923 to 750 in 1924.

The circulation of the majority of the Tamil newspapers remained as it was in 1923. The *Swadesmitran* continued to be the leading Tamil daily, with a circulation of 7,000. The *Ananda Bodhini*, a Tamil monthly, dealing with general news had a circulation of 2,000.

Among the Telugu newspapers, the *Andhra Patrika* continued to have the largest circulation, 7,000, including daily and weekly editions. Two of the new Telugu papers, *Gandhi Gita* and *Satyagraha*, published weekly and both of advanced political views, each had a circulation of 2,000.

There has been little change in the tone of the Press during the year. In the following matters, amongst others, the actions of the Governments and officials concerned met with much hostile criticism both from papers published in English and from those in a vernacular:—The Reforms Enquiry Committee, the Public Services Commission and its recommendations, the situation in Bengal and the Bengal Ordinance No. 1 of 1924, the re-settlement in Tanjore district, the O'Dwyer Nair case, the *Bombay Chronicle* case, Jaito Jatha, Vaikom Satyagraha campaign, the action of the British Government with reference to the murder of Sir Lee Stack in Egypt, the floods of 1924, the position of Indians in the Colonies.

The number of publications declared forfeited under the Code of Criminal Procedure fell from 182 during 1923 to 71 during 1924. This fall is no doubt due to the fact that communist literature is stopped to an increasing extent by the use of the Sea Customs Act. The editor and publisher of the Telugu weekly newspaper *Congress*, published at Rajahmundry, East Godavari district, was prosecuted for sedition. He was convicted and imprisoned.

CONGRESS & CONFERENCES

January-June 1926.

NINTH SESSION OF THE All-India Hindu Mahasabha

OPENING DAY—13TH MARCH 1926.

The ninth session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha commenced at Delhi on the 13th March 1926 in the afternoon. Unfortunately, just when the Mahasabha met, the weather which was inclement since morning, became worse. It began to rain, with the result that, though the pandal was very spacious and could accommodate 15,000 men, the attendance hardly exceeded 4,000, most of whom were visitors. The majority of the delegates' enclosures were not filled and visitors were permitted to occupy these.

The decorations were simple. Mostly Khaddar was used. Numerous mottoes were hung. One of these said "Keep a brave spirit and never despair." Another said, "Honor the Women." The programme was printed in Hindi and the proceedings were also conducted in Hindi. Punctually at one the presidential procession entered the pandal. It included Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai, Swami Sradhanand, Mr. Vijiaraghavachari, Raja Sir Rampal Singh, Lala Ramsaran Das, Bhai Parmanand, Mr. Acharya, Mr. Rama Iyengar, Mr. G. P. Singh, Mr. A. N. Dutt, Pundit Neki Ram, Pundit K. K. Malaviya, Lala Hansraj, Dr. Choitram, Mr. Jairamdas, and a number of other Hindu leaders and Pundits. Just when the proceedings started with songs and prayers it began to rain harder.

At this stage Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, Mr. Rangachariar, Dr. Moonji and Mr. D. P. Sinha arrived. Two minutes later Pundit Motilal Nehru arrived accompanied by Mr. Ranga Iyer. When Pundit Motilal got up to the dais there were cheers from all quarters. A fairly large number of ladies were present in the special enclosure.

Welcome Address.

Rai KEDARNATH, retired Sessions Judge and the principal founder of Ramjas College, Delhi welcomed the delegates and visitors in his capacity of the Chairman of the Reception Committee. He read his address in Hindi. Rai Kedar Nath dwelt at length on the past glory of the Hindus and emphasized the need for regeneration of the community and said if child marriage were given up there would be no girl widows. He urged proper treatment and education of widows to prevent their conversion to other religions. He next touched on the position of untouchables and said that at one place the Hindus would not permit an untouchable to get on a well, the Mahomedans would ask him to accept Islam whereby he was able to use the same well. The Hindus must give up this right and treat the untouchables properly. He drew the picture of dangers facing the Hindu community and strongly appealed amidst applause that every nerve of the community should be strained to make Sangathan and Suddhi move-

ments successful. He recalled how the Hindus assisted the Khilafat movement by sending hundreds to jails and by displeasing Government and yet what was the result—Malabar, Multan, Saharanpur riots culminating in Kohat tragedy. He was emphatic in his opinion that if their Sangathan became successful and the community became organized the Muslims would themselves woo the Hindus for friendship (applause). The speaker said that his personal opinion about the attitude the community should take towards Government was that, while he would not go out of his way to side with Government, he felt that the community could not afford to do without Government assistance. They had seen that they had to depend upon Government for protection in Delhi and other places. During the last Bakr-Id ten Hindus were murdered. I ask has a single culprit been brought to book? As regards Council elections he observed that if Muslims put up candidates on communal tickets the Hindus would sooner or later have to do the same but he admitted there was fear of division among Hindus themselves and he was satisfied that for the present their purpose would be served if they confined themselves to protecting Hindu interests only where those were threatened by putting up Mahasabha candidates. He concluded amidst loud cheers.

Raja Narendra Nath, President-elect, then came to the rostrum and read his address in Hindi. At this stage Moulana Mahomed Ali entered the pandal and was cheered. Swami Satyadev also followed soon and was cheered.

Presidential Address.

RAJA NARENDRANATH, in his presidential address, urged that the united voice of 220 millions should be raised to protect Hindu rights which are nowhere protected. The Mahasabha is as much an advocate of free and democratic institutions for the country and as eager to obtain Swaraj as any other body. But it notices with regret that so far constitution have been suggested and framed without due regard to the Hindu interests. We are told that political and civic interests of the Hindus and Muhammedans are the same. It should be so, but it is not so in fact owing to the defect in the constitution. The Muhammedans' interests are being treated as a separate class by itself and this has forced upon us the consideration of Hindu interests as a separate class. We cannot refrain from devoting serious thought to the consideration of those interests simply out of a fear that such a course will give rise to controversy and may delay our achievement of the goal of Swaraj. True Swaraj will be achieved where justice is done to the communities.

The President urged that the Sabha should put in strenuous fight against what has now become an acknowledged and admitted principle everywhere of determining the civic rights on the basis of caste and creed and should do whatever it can to make its voice heard by those to whom the duty of framing the constitution for India is assigned, whether it is a Statutory Commission or any other body. The Commonwealth of India Bill which is already in Parliament should be examined by a committee to be appointed with a view to ascertain whether the rights of the Hindus in every province are adequately protected by it.

Suddhi.

Regarding Suddhi the President said proselytism is not a modern conception in the land of Aryavarta. Buddhism was the first reform movement

amongst the Hindus. The religion which Buddha preached was for the whole of human race. Kabir and Guru Nanak followed him, preached in the same strain and Guru Gobind Singh gave an organised shape to the religion which sprung from Hinduism and which is based on the same cardinal principles as Hinduism. The idea of Shuddhi has, therefore, no connection with the recent political movements, and I do not see why those who stride for political advancement should call upon us to give up a moment based on the idea first conceived in the land of Aryavarta more than 25 centuries ago, before Christianity or Islam came into existence and before any religious preacher in the world thought of laying open the path of salvation to every human being, who sought it. Shuddhi is nothing else but proselytism, and it passed my comprehension why the right of conversion enjoyed by all other religious communities in the land should be denied to the Hindus who, in the history of the world, were the first to originate the idea. It is unnecessary to give a comparative numerical table of conversion. I would, however, lay stress on the fact that the idea of proselytism is pre-eminently our heritage, revived in different shapes by our religious reformers, who appeared from time to time.

Military Career for Hindus

Raja Narendranath laid a great stress on the military career and said : The Sabha should act as a protagonist to induce the people to overcome their reluctance to join the Army. There will be hopeless confusion, if military prowess is allowed to remain in the hands of select classes. The Brahmin and Vaisya should be as ready to wield sword as the Rajputs.

The Raja said that the fissiparous tendency is the bane of India and that tendency is manifested in pre-eminent degree by the Hindus. Organization will lead to disorganization, if smaller groups begin to organize themselves with objects conflicting with those of the larger group. Such a course would weaken instead of strengthening the Hindu society. The liberal section of the Hindus, so far as social reform is concerned, should carry with them conservatives and the conservative section should realize that liberals of former generation are conservatives of the present. Let not the ship of the Hindu consolidation be wrecked on squabbles as to the manner in which the cause of social reform has to be advanced.

The President urged the removal of untouchability and education of women and solidarity of all sections of the Hindus. He aimed at nationalisation by cultural assimilation. "There is much in the Islamic culture which I admire and we have, at certain stages of our history, imbibed much that is useful in the culture of Islam, though I regret to observe that the Muslims have not imbibed our culture which has much to teach them."

Frontier Problems

The President referred at length to the frontier problem and the condition of the Hindus. The communal vote, as usual devised the protection of minorities, is not looked on with favour by him, for a council constituted on communal basis naturally wishes to extend the principle to the various spheres of activity, to services and educational institutions. The only remedy for this state of things is to apply the rule of proportional representation through single transferrable votes and the question is whether the electorate in N. W. F. Province is sufficiently advanced to

understand the rule and to work it. The President made clear that the Hindus want no special protection for the Hindu minority anywhere which we do not want. On the contrary our grievance at present is that greater solicitude is shown for the protection of the interests of the Muhammedan minority than for the protection of the interests of Hindu minority, wherever it is found to exist. We cannot agree to any measures of protection which we do not want for ourselves and which are subversive of the essential principle of democratic Government, founded, as it is, on the maxim that all human beings are equal. So far as the acquisition of civic rights is based on the State-made laws, we complain that what the majority community may concede to the Muhammedan minority solely on the ground that they are in a majority in some places is claimed by our Muhammedan friends as the privilege and prerogative in the provinces, in which they are not in a minority. But the problem which the N. W. F. Province presents is a different one. It is not merely that of protection of the empire and security of life and property of the minority at the hands of those outside the province over whom our Muhammedan fellow citizens of the Province have no control. Is there any part in India in which the Muhammedan minority is exposed to the risks and dangers to which the Hindu minority in the N. W. F. Province is exposed? The constitutions are guides for the exercise of the judgment; they control human passions.

Raja Narendranath's address took over an hour to deliver. His remark desiring Hindus of all castes to take to military career and those regarding Shuddhi and Sangathan movement were particularly cheered.

Proceedings and Resolutions.

After the Presidential Address was over Raja Narendranath put from the chair the condolence resolution which were passed all standing.

2.—The Sewak Association

Bhai PERMANAND then moved the following resolution regarding the formation of the Hindu Sewak Association :—

In order to defend the rights and interests of the Hindu Community and to further the growth and development of Hindu unity on lines laid down by the Hindu Mahasabha and also to serve the cause of protection, the establishment of an order of Hindu Sewaks is necessary who will devote the whole of their time and energy to the service of the Hindu Nation. Resolved further that in order to give practical shape to the resolution a fund be raised with interest whereof the above objects may be carried out.

Bhai Permanand said the idea of combining all religions was conceived by the Brahmo Samaj at the sacrifice of Hindu religion but the movement failed. Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj, conceived the idea of unity of all Hindus, but fortunately or unfortunately his followers in the beginning devoted most of their attention to carrying a raging propaganda against certain beliefs and practices which made the Sanatanists organize themselves in opposition. Though the speaker was an Arya Samajist he now firmly believed that the community was faced with the danger of extinction and it was the duty of all Hindus to sink their differences and join on a common platform to save them from extinction. He said it might be asked why it was that they did not leave this work of unity to the National Congress. "For forty years we have left this to the Congress but we find that the

Congress had failed to bring about unity. I tell my political leaders and the President of the Congress, Mrs. Naidu, (who had just then arrived) that you will not attain unity as you have tried hitherto by sacrificing the Hindus. (Cheers). You can get unity only by strengthening the Hindus (cheers) and that is why Sangathan is a vital necessity. (Cheers). I ask the Hindus to suspend all other activities for five years, whether political or otherwise, and to concentrate their attention on Sangathan only (Cheers). But to do this we must have organized workers and life members devoted to the cause of the Mahasabha. We want Swaraj but it cannot be achieved so long as Hindus do not unite and become a strong united community. Let us protect our rights and stand against their sacrifice by the National Congress (cheers). What is happening in the Punjab to-day will happen to the people in Bengal and elsewhere."

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Jagat Narain and was passed amidst acclamation. The Mahasabha then adjourned till next day.

SECOND DAY—14TH MARCH 1926.

The Mahasabha was originally timed to meet at eleven on this day, but owing to the prolonged session of the Subjects Committee on the election issue, the Mahasabha could not meet till 1 P. M., when the weather cleared up and the pandal was fairly full, over ten thousand being present.

The Compromise arrived by the Subjects Committee against the policy of running the general elections and confining the Mahasabha's activity in this respect was only to the putting up of candidates in cases where a particular candidate was not considered to be such as would safeguard the community's interest. This settlement and decision of Bhai Parmananda, leader of the party in favour of running the general elections, made the day's proceedings calm.

On this day not only a large crowd of visitors and delegates constituted the audience, but the number of distinguished visitors and Hindu leaders also increased. Distinguished among those present were the Maharaja of Burdwan, the Hon'ble Mr. Patel, Mrs. Naidu, Mr. Birla, Raja Sir Rampal Singh and Dr. Gokul Chand Narang, besides those present the day before.

3.—Removal of Untouchability.

Dr. CHOITRAM moved the following resolution for the removal of untouchability, liberalising last years's proposal on the subject.

This session of the Hindu Mahasabha appeals to the Hindus in general to remove all restraints which are at present imposed on the so-called depressed classes called untouchables in the way of their use of public schools, public wells and public roads and in their attendance at public meetings. This Conference appeals to the authorities of the Hindu temples to provide facilities for 'devadarshan.'

Dr. Choitram said that he read in the newspapers the day before that Sir Ramanathan, Lady and Miss Ramanathan were refused admission to a Madura temple, but when, next day, they accompanied the Governor of Madras they were received with special welcome (cries of "shame"). With what face could they ask South Africa and the Colonies to treat Indians better so long as they maintained untouchability. This blot must be removed. Otherwise the Muslim and Christian Missionaries would take advantage of the weakness of their social system.

Mr. Bibari LAL, supporting the resolution declared, amidst cheers, that he was the son of a "chamar" (untouchable class). He made a moving appeal to the audience to listen to the request of the untouchables which was nothing more than a request to "live and let live" (applause). If they did not take this warning then their ship would sink and nothing would save it.

Mr. Ganga Vishnu SASTRI spoke in the capacity of a Sanatanist. He did not disguise that the resolution had caused some stir in the Sanatanist camp and that the Subjects Committee of the Sanatanist Conference was already having a heated discussion on the subject. His opinion was that, unless the Hindu Mahasabha took up the question of the removal of untouchability, it had no business to exist (applause). But at the same time, they must not proceed at a pace as would divide their ranks bitterly and must, therefore, act cautiously. He strongly believed that the Shastric injunctions did not stand in the way of the removal of untouchability. It was said that they mixed with Mahomedans because they could not help it. Why could not a similar condition apply to the untouchables? He deprecated the squabbles over the terms of the resolutions and asked all Sanatanists to accept Pundit Malaviya's lead in this respect.

Swami Sachchidananda VEDANTI did not believe that religion gave sanction to four castes, and not to five. But even if the 'Shastras' did give sanction to such a practice, the speaker maintained that the shastras, which stood in the way of the advancement of the community, should not be acted upon. All the rights that the Brahmins had enjoyed should be enjoyed by all castes (applause).

Dewan Bahadur RANGACHARIAR, Deputy President of the Legislative Assembly, said that it gave him great pleasure to support the resolution at the great gathering collected to devise measures to see that their community once again became supreme in this land as it had been for centuries. The South was the worst sinner in respect of untouchability. Intellectuals as the Southerners pretended to be, it was their attitude towards the untouchables that had made the problem so acute. He narrated two anecdotes very common in the South, which told them that their two religious leaders were born untouchables. It was said that these were exceptions, but he asked why did an untouchable become touchable the moment he became Christian or Muslim? This was shameful. The problem was however such as required patience, for there were many difficulties to be got over. They must, therefore, proceed cautiously. Some progress had already been made in this presidency. The Depressed classes were admitted to public schools and wells and sat in local bodies and local Councils, but much more was needed. He heartily commended the resolution for acceptance.

Disorderly Scenes.

Hitherto it seemed plain sailing, but when the time came for putting the resolution to the vote and the President declared it carried by a majority, considerable sensation was created by the opposition. One of them shouted from the audience that he would never agree to admit the untouchables to inter-dining and wearing of the sacred thread. This opposition was acclaimed by a section.

The President said that Swami Prakashanand informed him that he had sent in a notice signed by twenty other members to oppose this resolution and move an amendment. The President said that he had received no such notice.

This was the signal for some outburst and shouts of denial from the Sanatanists. Confusion arose and the orthodox wing got up to walk out in protest. One Sanatanist was seen waving his flag, being the signal for his followers to walk out.

Pundit Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai and other leaders repaired to the raised platform but were powerless. For some minutes confusion continued. In the meantime some Sanatanists were seen leaving the Pandal. The Sanatanist leaders and reformers immediately held conversations. Pundit Malaviya did his best to restore calm with the result that after fifteen minutes, the feelings subsided and the Sanatanist leaders took their seats on the dais. Pandit Malaviya succeeded in securing a calm hearing for the President, Raja NARENDRA NATH, who explained that two hours ago he received a letter but handed it over to the Secretary, and he did not know what it contained. He said that the opposition wanted to move an amendment opposing some parts of the resolution. He had only declared that the resolution was passed by a majority and suggested that it should be left to the Working Committee to keep both last year's and this year's resolution in giving effect to the proposals. He did not call on the opposition speaker because he had been informed that Pundit Malaviya was trying to secure a compromise.

Pundit MALAVIYA said that his efforts for a compromise had failed, but he wanted the audience to understand that, while the oppositionists were prepared to go further than last year's resolution, they were not prepared to go as far as the present resolution went, particularly in respect of the use of wells. He, however, appealed to the audience to accept the President's ruling that the resolution had been passed by a majority, and not unanimously, and he hoped that they would work for unanimity in future.

Lala LAJPAT RAI now came to the rostrum and was heard in pin-drop silence. He began to dissect the resolution in order to ascertain how far there was dissent. He asked whether there could be any difference of opinion regarding the use of public wells, public schools and public roads (Cries of "No, no") for these were maintained at public expense. As regards private wells, schools and roads their owners had the liberty to act as they liked and no one could force them to act otherwise (applause). As for the temples, the resolution did not have any mandatory character. It was permissive. It did not force the temple authorities to admit the untouchables, if they did not wish to. It only wished that proper arrangements for worship be made. Was there anything objectionable in this? (Cries of "No, no"). Thus, the resolution was not materially different from last year's. Only it altered the language, because the religious missionaries of other societies, finding some loop-hole in last year's resolution, had distributed leaflets in lakhs among the untouchables to prevent the Hindu Sabha organisation making progress with them. He was not disappointed at the feeling in the house. If they had quarrels it showed that they were alive, and not asleep. It showed life in the community.

Confusion in the Sabha

Pandit DINDAYAL next repaired to the rostrum to explain the point of view of the orthodox section. He said that 150 leading 'pundits' from all over India were invited by Pandit Malaviya last year at Benares and the resolution framed then represented their considered unanimous opinion. He himself felt as much for the untouchables as any other and would do his best to see that no untouchables left them. But he felt that last year's resolution sanctioned the removal of untouchability "according to shastric injunction and as far as possible." These words had, however, been omitted now. He asked why?

While Pandit Dindayal held the platform over, confusion arose three times and numerous members from the audience shouted contrary opinions.

Pandit Malaviya now came to explain that the quarrel was merely one of words, for Lala Lajpat Rai's speech should leave no ground for quarrel. He assured his Sanatanist friends that, as one of them, he would not let any resolution be passed which was against 'dharma'. The resolution was not against 'shastric' injunctions. They were there to form Sangathan and must not precipitate a crisis over words. The views of the opposition had been fully explained by Pandit Dindayal and had been recorded and the proceedings should be continued.

It appeared as if calm had finally been restored, when Pandit Dindayal and Swami Dayanada again came over to the platform. Pandit Dindayal asked that now that they had been told not to be introduced (?) what should they do? There was general response from his followers who said, "Let us walk out." A number of them rose and the house again fell into confusion.

Pandit Malaviya again came to the rostrum and said that they had assembled on that day to enhance their prestige, but their quarrels were having a contrary effect. They would repent their action if they walked out. There was nothing in the resolution against their Dharma, and if there was, he would take the whole course on his head (applause).

He had hardly gone back to the dais than Swami Dayanand and Pt. Dindayal again rose to speak. This caused another outburst of shouts, asking them to sit down. Lala Lajpat Rai came to explain the position and was cheered, but by this time the house was again in a state of pandemonium.

Pandit Malaviya came and made a final appeal, asking those who differed either to quietly walk-out or to remain in the house and bow to the President's ruling, for the resolution had been passed by a majority. The walk-out would cause them pain, but it could not be avoided if a party was determined on it. If, however, quiet was not restored, he would be obliged to leave the pandal.

Pandit Dindayal announced his acceptance of Pandit Malaviya's appeal and quiet was restored after two hours' stormy session.

The Shuddhi programme was passed unanimously and the Mahasabha rose till next day.

THIRD DAY—15TH MARCH 1926.

The Mahasabha assembled again on the 15th March in the morning with a thin house and accepted two resolutions moved from the Chair. One effect-

ed some verbal changes in the constitution of the Sabha and the other re-affirmed the resolution passed at the last annual session regarding the education of children, promotion of fraternal relations with other sister communities, use of swadeshi goods in general and of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth in particular, formation of volunteer organisations for social and religious work and the promotion of cow protection.

4.—Resolution on Sangathan.

Mr. VIJYARAGHAVACHARI of Salem then moved his resolution on Sangathan. He said that the movement of Sangathan had two objects, one of defending Hinduism against outside attacks and, secondly, to promote harmony and good-will between the different communities in India. The Hindus should do justice to their communities as was to themselves. The object of Sangathan was to find out the causes of the disintegration of the Hindus and remove all such cases, thereby bringing about unity amongst all communities of Hindus. All persons professing Hinduism should be brought within one fold.

Swami Satya Dev said that the Sangathan had been started with the object of infusing a national spirit in India. The quarrel with the Muslims and Christians was not of religion, but of culture, because Indian culture had been so far identified with Hindu culture.

Bhai Pramanand said that the Congress had been changing phases and had undergone considerable change from the time when Mahatma Gandhi was at its head. To-day men and money of the Congress were to be used for running its own elections. The way adopted by the Congress of uniting the Hindus and Muslims had failed and Sangathan was the only way to achieve it. The protection of Hindu interests required that politics should be a part of the Sangathan and that the Hindu Sabha should run its own candidates for the next general elections unless the Congress undertook to protect Hindu interests. He supported the resolution.

Lala Lajpat Rai said that the one object of the resolution was to sail clear of politics. The Mahasabha had liberals, conservatives, radicals and even anarchists among its members. It was, therefore, impossible to give a common political programme. If the Hindus would send their best men to the Councils the Sabha and Sangathan work would suffer. He asked whether there was any Hindu in the Councils to-day who acted against Hindu interests. (A voice: Pandit Motilal Nehru). Lala Lajpat Rai refuted the allegations and said that Pandit Motilal was one of the few patriotic Indians who had given their all for the country. In conclusion, he exhorted the Hindus not to treat other communities contemptuously.

The Rajkumar of Amethi and Pt. Hari Har Sarup also supported the resolution, which was unanimously adopted.

A number of resolutions were then put from the Chair protesting against the judicial intervention in Hindu processions and separation of the North Western Frontier Province from the Central Government's control, and were adopted.

5.—Reforms for Frontier Province.

The following resolution was also passed :—

"Whereas the administration of the N. W. F. Province was separated from the Punjab with the express object of bringing it directly under the Government of India, and, whereas the safety of India from foreign aggression and also protection of non-Muslim inhabitants, require that the administration of that province should continue to be an All-India concern, and whereas there is a large deficit in the finance of that province, which is made good by the Central Government, this Maha Sabha is strongly opposed to the proposed scheme to convert the administration of that province into a separate province under the Government of India Act, and is of opinion that it should continue to remain under the direct administration of the Central Government".

6.—Resolution on Council Entry.

The question of Council entry was then taken up. The following is the text of the Resolution :—

"This session of the Hindu Mahasabha confirms and adopts the resolution of the Working Committee passed at Simla on the 23rd August 1925, to the effect, for the protection of Hindu interests, that Hindu Sabhas should not put forward candidates for election, but, in case of an apprehension that any candidate is undesirable for and will be harmful to Hindu interests, it should be the duty of the Hindu voters to oppose such candidate.

"This Mahasabha empowers the committee appointed at Belgaum for the purpose of ascertaining and formulating Hindu opinion on the subject of Hindu-Muslim problems in relation to the question of further constitutional reforms to watch over Hindu interests in the coming elections to the legislatures and authorises that in consultation with Provincial Hindu Sabha, and having regard to the conditions obtaining in different provinces, it should take all proper steps which include the running of its own candidates where necessary to safeguard Hindu interests.

"This Mahasabha requests and expects all political parties in the legislatures to so arrange their party programme and work as to leave the members of different religious communities free to vote on matters affecting their own particular community."

Rai Kedar Nath in lending his support to the motion said the resolutions was so worded that it would be acceptable to both sections of Hindus, namely, those who stood for controlling election and those who were opposed to it.

Pandit Nekiram Sharma declared that the resolution embodied a warning to all Hindu members to keep the interests of the community their principal concern in all legislative and municipal institutions.

A Confusion.

Lala Duni Chand said that he was not in agreement with the resolution. The speaker wanted to proceed when the President asked him to read the statement of Pandit Motilal Nehru. This resulted in much confusion. Lala Duni Chand said he would not budge an inch from the rostrum unless he was dragged bodily and that he should be allowed to reply to the points raised by Bhai Permanand. At last, however, the speaker consented to read the statement of Pandit Motilal after Mrs. Naidu came and sat near him. The following is the text of the statement :—

Pt. Motilal's Statement.

"I was given to understand that there was a proposal to move the Hindu Mahasabha to run elections to the Assembly and provincial Councils in opposition to the Indian National Congress. Swarajists had no business in the Assembly after the 8th March, but having regard to the far-reaching consequences of this proposal, I made up my mind to prolong my stay in Delhi so as to be present at the Mahasabha session, which was advertised for the 18th and 14th March. I attended the Sabha on both these days, but the question of running elections was not taken up. I am informed that it will come up for discussion to-day. I am sorry I have to leave Delhi this morning to keep a long standing engagement and cannot be present at to-day's meeting. I am therefore leaving this note with my friend and colleague Lala Dunichand to be read before the Mahasabha, as my considered opinion on this question. The time at my disposal will not permit me to set down in this note all that I should have liked to have said if permitted by the President to speak at the Mahasabha, of which I am not a member. I beg therefore to be pardoned for giving my opinion without going fully into the reason on which it is based. I am constitutionally incapable of entering into the communal aspect of the question and can only speak from the Nationalist points of view. But it seems to me that in this particular instance it coincides with the communal point of view. The Hindu Mahasabha has laid itself out to accomplishing the very desirable object of bringing about solidarity of the Hindu races inhabiting India, and I beg the Sabha to approach the question from that standpoint alone. The Mahasabha claims Congressmen, Swarajists, Liberals, Moderates, Loyalists, and even anarchists among its members, and is thus supposed to represent all shades of political thought in the country. It has not only no political programme of its own, but brings together under its banner political parties as wide apart as the poles. How then can it possibly perform the functions of a political caucus. The eligibility of candidates for election is not to be judged by their political convictions, but by degree of solicitude they show to protect communal interests. It is obvious that an extreme non-co-operating Congressman may have it in the same degree as an ultra Loyalist. The Sabha will have to adopt both as its candidates. Would it be possible for these two to go together on any question that may come up before the legislature? It may and will in all probability happen that where the interest of Hindus as such is jeopardised, a non-co-operating Congressman will by reason of his convictions resort to a line of action diametrically opposed to that which will suggest itself to an ultra Loyalist. To put an extreme case, the non-co-operator might resort to some kind of civil disobedience, while the ultra Loyalist might content himself with petitions, memorials, and deputations. It is difficult to conceive how a political caucus can possibly run candidates with such divergent views. The Hindu Sabha, if it undertakes to run elections, can only do so as a caucus. It is no use concealing the fact that the Indian National Congress is predominantly a Hindu organization. It started and developed as such. In spite of the revival of independent Muslim organizations and all the vicissitudes of fortune that it has passed through, the Indian National Congress remains, and will always continue to be the premier national institution of the country. Why is it at all necessary to usurp its functions and confer them on a newly started Hindu organisation? What is there to prevent the Hindu Mahasabha as a whole to enlist itself in the ranks of the national institution? I have heard complaints that the Congress does not look after the interests of Hindus. Does the true remedy lie in opposing your great national institution for communal advantages, or is it to be found by supporting it for the good of all communities? It is impossible for me to give adequate expression to all that I feel on this question within the time at my disposal. I am dictating these lines shortly before I have to leave Delhi. I cannot wait even to examine the transcript of the shorthand notes; but I must utter a note of warning before I finish. Your efforts at strengthening and unifying Hindus of all castes and classes, will be entirely frustrated if you adopt the proposal to run elections to the Council. Besides the numerous castes and sub-castes that you are already affiliated with, you will be creating further divisions on political grounds. You will be estranging from each other men of the same caste and sub-castes, by forcing them into hostile political camps, and it will be beyond your power to reunite them even to an extent to which they stand united to-day. You have started to bring about a Sangathan of Hindu races, but you will end with total disruption of Hindu society. After dictating the above, I must say a word on the proposal to constitute a committee to decide whether a particular candidate is, or is not qualified to protect the interests of Hindus in the Councils. This proposal is, I make bold to say, based on a total misapprehension of the true nature of

democratic institutions. We have special electorates under the existing system, and only such Hindus can be elected by Hindu electorates as enjoy their confidence. Those Hindus who contest a particular election, have to satisfy their Hindu constituents of their fitness to protect their interests, and no extemporaneous genius is required to help them in their selection. It is the privilege of the constitution to call upon him to resign, and if they do, he cannot resist the call for any length of time. The one thing which is necessary, is to instruct the electorates of these rights from the members who represent them. I am sure that the Congress will only be too pleased to invite the assistance of the Hindu Sabha for imparting such instructions to the electorates, but as I have said before, the true remedy lies in a Hindu Sabha as a body joining the Indian National Congress and thereby influencing the whole programme of work in the Councils."

After Lala Dunichand has finished reading the statement, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya came to the rostrum and said he was rejoiced that the Mahasabha's move in regard to Council entry, had attracted the members of the Swaraj Party to attend the present session. The Hindus, said the Pandit, were not asked to talk about Mahasabha, whereas Muslims stood firm in their Muslim League. It was a wrong pessimism to think that Hinduism would disintegrate if elections were run on a Mahasabha ticket.

The resolution on being put to vote was carried by an overwhelming majority, Swami Shradhananda and a few Swarajists present dissenting.

After a brief speech by Raja Narendra Nath the session concluded.

SPECIAL SESSION OF

The All-India Khilafat Conference

DELHI—8TH & 9TH MAY 1926.

The special session of the Khilafat Conference opened at Delhi on the 8th May in the morning in a pandal specially erected on the Maidan near the Delhi Fort. About three hundred delegates, representing practically all the provinces, and over a thousand visitors attended on this day. Distinguished among those present were the Ali Brothers, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Haji Hasan Nizami and Moulana Suleman. The proceedings commenced with recitations from the Quran.

Welcome Address.

Hakim AJMAL KHAN, Chairman of the Reception Committee, then rose to welcome the delegates and in the course of his address declared that the Khilafat Conference was not an organisation like the Hindu Mahasabha. It had never adopted a communal programme, though the Hakim Sahib admitted that some of the Khilafat workers had taken part in communalism. He regretted that the present state of Hindu-Moslem dissensions had overshadowed the national idea of freedom which was the birthright of every Indian.

Continuing, Hakim Ajmal Khan asserted that the affairs in Malabar and Kohat had excited the Hindus, infused a new life in Hindu communal activities and made the Mahasabha adopt measures like Sangathan and Shuddhi. He asked whether such happenings did not occur at Arrah and Katarpur a few years ago, where a very large number of Mohamedans were the victims, but the Moslems took no action over it. He deplored that while they had no communal organisations, Hindu organisations were jeopardising the very existence of Islam. Concluding, the Chairman of the Reception Committee appealed to all Hindus to reconsider their programme and not to push the Moslems into the ditch of communalism.

Presidential Address.

Moulana Syed SULEMAN NADVI (Leader of the Khilafat delegation to the Hedjaz Muslim Conference) was then formally elected president amidst loud cheers of "Allah O Akbar." He delivered his presidential address extempore in Urdu for about two hours.

He traced the history and aims and objects of the Khilafat movement from its inception to the present date and referred specially to its pro-national actives. He said it had worked for Islam abroad and it must protect their religion when it was in danger owing to the highhandedness of their neighbouring communities in India. Prominent Hindu leaders had openly incited the Hindus against the Moslems and yet advocated national unity at the Con-

gross platform. But if the Hindus, he said, really wanted Swaraj, peace and brotherly good will to prevail in India they should abandon their present mentality.

The Muslims in India did not mind Sangathan but they were strongly concerned about Shuddhi. The Shuddhi movement was started in recent years at the instigation of a third party with financial help from even Hindu Native States like Kashmir and Baroda. The Sangathan, said the Maulana, had not been instituted for accelerating the attainment of Swaraj but for dragging back the Moslems who were progressing forward for the attainment of Swaraj. The Khilafat workers, who were staunch supporters of Swaraj, did not deviate from their course even when their co-religionists accused them of anti-Muslim activities.

Proceeding the speaker said that the question now was how long could they allow the Muslims to be victimised by the Government on the one side and the Hindus on the other. The Mahomedans had in the past forfeited their riches, their lands and even their Empires but they had stood firm by their religion and would not tolerate interference with their religious rights and love for Islam. In spite of all these hardships on them they felt it was not a courageous step to have a strong enemy and lay hands on unarmed Hindus. The times, however, had come when they should extend their hand to the Hindus who might accept it in friendship or as opposers in a wrestling field.

He reminded the audience that after the breakdown of the Muslim Empire the Hindus of Maharashtra and Bengal replaced their swords with pens and were poisoning the minds of the Hindus by writing anti-Muslim literature and dramas. He challenged the Hindus to prove if any Mahomedan writer had done so.

Concluding the speaker said the Muslims must not depend upon the help of either Englishmen or Hindus, but must live by their own strength and appealed for unity amongst all sections of Mussalmans.

Call for 10,000 Volunteers.

Mr. Abdur Rahman DOJANWE, who was to leave for Haj on that day, was allowed to address the Conference. He said that they had gathered together to deliver funeral orations on Hindu-Muslim unity. He deplored that slavery was ingrained in Hindu blood and they (Hindus) could not tolerate to see the Muslims free.

Sangathan and Shuddhi were movements to divert the Muslim mind from Swaraj and enchain them for years to come. By their slavery of the last twelve hundred years, the Hindu mentality had been altogether changed. To them Swaraj did not mean freedom as was evident from their recent activity.

The Maulvi, proceeding, said that whatever religion was against freedom, should be crushed and annihilated. For this they had to send out many fighters. Every Muslim should be exhorted to bear in mind that he had no respect or companion for a "kafir," and even to extend the hand of friendship towards the Hindus would be construed as a sign of weakness on the part of Mussalmans. They should tell the Hindus to do what they please while they themselves should do what was necessary. They should, for instance, organize 10,000 volunteers under the leadership of Maulana Mahomed Ali in Delhi to safeguard Muslim interests against the repetition of Calcutta riots. If the Muslims in India come out in the field with an effective force, the Lalas would come forward with folded hands and make peace in two hours.

The Conference dispersed at 12 o'clock and reassembled at 9 P.M. in the evening. Attendance improved considerably, the Pandit being fully packed. The proceedings were very lively and deliberations continued till the small hours of the morning.

Two resolutions were passed, one regarding change in the constitution of the Khilafat Committee enabling it to undertake work for the amelioration of conditions of Moslems in India, Tanzania, Tabligh, education etc., and the other dealing with steps to be taken to help Muslims before and after disturbances, before in form of efforts for peace, after in helping accused on trial etc., widows and orphans.

Maulana Shirajuddin of Rowari made a short speech denouncing the new move. With what force, he asked, could they, who had all along been condemning the Hindu Sabhas, now adopt its method? No good would come out of it. Only those who had so far kept out of the Hindu Sabha would join it, and further strengthen "Sangathan", while the Ali Brothers would be enjoying Haj.

Maulana Mohamed Ali in supporting Tabligh said it was the duty of every Muslim to convert non-Muslims to Islam. He prayed for the day when he would convert Mahatma Gandhi to Islam.

Khilafat Committee's Creed.

Maulana MAHOMED ALI moved the first resolution which runs as follows :

This conference resolves that the following shall be the creed of the Central Khilafat Committee :—

- (a) There shall be formed one great Khilafat Central organisation.
- (b) It shall make all efforts for the freedom of Zariat-ul-Arab and for the betterment of the Hedjaz and holy cities and the introduction of reforms in those places according to circumstances.
- (c) It shall struggle for the attainment of Swaraj in India.
- (d) It shall always strive to safeguard the religious, educational, social, economical and political interests of Indian Musalmans and to reform and organise them.

Maulana Mahomed Ali, in moving the resolution, referred to certain Hindu celebrities who were creating new Indian histories which reflected adversely on the past Muslim rulers. The allegations contained in these histories, he said, stood self-condemned as the Muslim empires existed for over six hundred years. The Muslims were the advocates of Indian Swaraj, and not of the Afghan rule in India as was alleged by the Hindus. He deplored the disorganised state of the Muslims and appealed for men and money with a right to kick out those workers who misappropriated their funds.

Maulana Hussain AHMAD KHAN alluded to the Hindu activities for creating an alliance with foreign communities like the Budhists, inviting the Maharaja of Nepal to preside over the Hindu Mahasabha and such other deeds the like of which was not attempted by the Muslims.

Md. Saddique of Kadian also supported the resolution which on being put to the vote was carried, one delegate dissenting.

Communal Dissensions.

Maulana Zafarul MULLICK proposed the following resolution —:

The Special Session of the Khilafat Conference, having regard to and after considering the existing state of affairs that has been created by dissensions and disturbances and

by the increasing frictions between Hindus and Mussalmans and having regard to the fact that not much action has so far been taken that could put a stop to these disturbances or check them effectively and bring the prevailing state of affairs under complete control, considers that wherever it might be necessary to safeguard the interests, life and property of Indian Muslims, all action should be taken that may be found necessary to meet local conditions. The conference, therefore, directs all Khilafat Committees as follows: Wherever there may be a possibility of tension between Hindus and Muslims or wherever a disturbance has actually taken place owing to communal feelings, the Khilafat Committee should do all to get the matter settled amicably, compose the differences, remove the tension and achieve an honourable compromise between the parties through prominent Hindu and Muslim leaders of the province.

If the efforts at compromise fail the Khilafat Committee should do all to protect the political, social, economical and religious rights of the Muslims and render every moral and material support to the Moslems whose rights, interests, lives and property might have been endangered or suffered owing to communal dissensions or disturbances.

Everywhere before any disturbance has occurred, for the purpose of self-defence and in order to protect the Muslims and maintain peace volunteers of the Khilafat Corps should, under responsible workers and having full regard to the principles of the Khilafat Committee, be present at the places of the disturbance to render all possible help and service.

Whenever innocent Mahomedans have to be protected from the grip of the law court and tyranny of police the local Khilafat Committee should, after keeping in view their creed of non-co-operation take all necessary and urgent defensive action.

Every Khilafat Committee, which has to remove communal dissensions or protect the Muslims during or after the disturbances, should be authorised to raise special funds and spend the necessary amounts from their general fund. The committee may also require and get further aid, if necessary, from the Provincial and Central Khilafat Committees.

All Provincial Committees shall have to see that their subordinate committees act with full vigour upon the directions of this Conference, and whenever men, money or advice was needed the Provincial Committees should render every possible help.

In the course of his speech Maulana Mullick pointed out that the resolution was essentially a defensive measure in case communal disturbances occurred. He however, still hoped that unity could be effected with their Hindu brethren.

Uproarious Scenes.

At this stage a number of voices shouted against the speaker's using the word "brethren" for the Hindus. Uproarious scenes followed, a number of delegates standing up and demanding the withdrawal of the objectionable word. Some of them suggested that the Quran should be consulted on the subject. Calm was however, restored, but not until fervent appeals for tolerance by the President and Maulana Shaikat Ali were made.

Concluding the speaker emphasised that the resolution aimed at peaceful negotiations on honourable terms with the Hindus, but if their feelings were not reciprocated by the Hindus they knew their duty to Islam.

Maulana Mazhuruddin Khwaja Hassan Nizami and some others supported the resolution while Mr. Surajuddin opposed it. The resolution being put to the vote was carried, only four voting against it. The Conference then adjourned.

DELHI—9TH MAY 1926.

Sangathan Movement Condemned.

Four resolutions were passed at the resumed session of the Conference on the next morning. After recitations of poems, specially composed for the

occasion exhorting Muslims to organise and sacrifice themselves for their religion. Mr. Mohammad SHAFI proposed a resolution condemning responsible members of the Hindu Mahasabha for their Sangathan activities, which he characterised as a wrong and short-sighted policy, prejudicial to the prosperity and liberation of the country, and exhorting the Muslims to keep their feelings carefully under control and spend all their energies on the constructive programme of purification, improvement and strengthening of their community. The course of events in the country, said Mr. Shafi were gradually leading them to a crisis. The situation, he emphasised, was serious and required a speedy settlement. As before, the two communities were to live in India indefinitely. They could not afford to be always up in arms against each other. These inter-communal tumults were not only extremely injurious to the participants themselves but also stood in the way of attainment of self-government.

Maulana SHAUKAT ALI, supporting the resolution, eulogised the Khilafatists for furthering the national cause, inspite of the Hindus. England, said the Maulana, had misled the Hindus from national activities to inter-communal strife and aggression. He advised the Mussalmans not to commit the same blunder. Both the communities should try to live in a state of friendship towards each other. If the Hindus or any other community attacked the Muslims, he would always advise them to pay back in the like manner.

Mr. SURAJUDDIN opposed the resolution, as he was against the Khilafat organisation undertaking such programme which he said, should be left to other bodies. The resolution was eventually carried by an overwhelming majority.

Economy in Expenditure.

Maulana Mohammed ARFAN next moved a resolution requesting Muslims to give up all unnecessary expenditure at times of festivities and funerals. He pointed out how the Muslims in India were handicapped, chief of them being their poverty and lack of organisation. This resolution, too, was carried unanimously.

Other Resolutions.

Maulana Abubakkar moved the third resolution exhorting Muslims to perform regular prayers in congregations five times a day. Khawaja Hassan Nizami vehemently supported the resolution, which was carried.

The last resolution appealed to the Muslims to keep intact their religious interests, to bring about necessary reforms among themselves and to extend mutual toleration and avoid calling others "Kaffirs" on trifling differences.

The meeting then adjourned to meet again in the evening when the conference concluded after the adoption of resolutions sympathising with the Mussalman victims in the Panipat riots, condemning the anti-Moslem literature, defining the Khilafat policy towards the attainment of Swaraj and appointing a committee to formulate the rights and claims of the Moslems and put them forward before the country.

The Central Sikh League

LAHORE—3RD APRIL 1926.

Before a gathering of about 4,000 visitors and delegates, the fifth session of the Central Sikh League was opened on the 3rd April at the Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore amidst scenes of enthusiasm and repeated shouts of "Sat Sri Akal."

Besides the prominent Sikh leaders there were present well-known Congressmen, including Lala Lajpat Rai, Lala Dun chand, Dr. Satyapal and a few Mussalmans. The Hall was profusely decorated. There was a life-size portrait of the ex-Maharaja of Nabha with his children.

After the Chairman of the Reception Committee's speech was over, Baba Gurdit Singh of Komagata Maru fame, read his Presidential address in Gurmukhi; and it was received with applause from all parts of the Hall.

The Presidential Address.

Baba GURDIT SINGH, in his address, said that they would not be able to work the Gurdwara Act unless the Akali prisoners were released unconditionally. He referred to the deaths of C. R. Dass and Sir Surendranath Banerjee, and urged the Government to recognise the rights of Sikhs in the Punjab consistently with their political status and martial importance, and condemned communal representation, characterising it as the direct cause of the Tanzeem and Shudhi movements.

He emphasised the importance of unity of all communities in India, and characterised the Reformed Councils as impotent giving no real power to the representatives of the people. He then referred to the recent Babbar Akali Conspiracy Cases, and expressed his sympathy, with those executed or imprisoned, and suggested the raising of a fund of Rs. 1½ lakhs for the maintenance of their families and of those of other Akali prisoners. He thought that the Babbar Akalis were patriots, and had suffered for love of country and appealed to the audience to generously subscribe towards the fund. He said that the Sikhs were soldiers in the battle for India's freedom. The attainment of Swaraj would be an impossibility if Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs and Christians did not join together and express their sympathy towards their brethren, who had courage to suffer for the cause of the country.

He made a feeling reference to the sacrifices made by the Akalis for the Gurdwara Reform Movement, and thanked the press and publicists throughout India for their continued support and sympathy with the Sikhs.

Referring to the abdication of the ex-Maharaja of Nabha and the consequent agitation amongst the Sikhs, Baba Gurdit Singh said that they would not rest content until the Maharaja was restored to the Gadi, as he thought his only fault was love of the Sikhs, the Panth, and the Motherland. He said that the Sikhs had set an example of true Satyagraha to all other communities. While enjoining upon his community to continue the policy of non-violence, he exhorted them to gird up their loins and press forward to the two-fold goal of religious freedom, and freedom for the motherland.

After the Presidential Address the Subjects Committee was elected, which sat in the evening to discuss the draft resolutions. The League then adjourned.

L'A HÔRE—4TH APRIL 1926.

Resolutions Passed.

The Central Sikh League met again the next day in open session to discuss the resolutions adopted by the Subjects Committee last night. The attendance of delegates and visitors was large.

Condolence Resolution.

The first two resolutions were put from the Chair and were carried unanimously. One referred to the loss the country sustained by the death of Deshabandhu Das and Surendranath Benerjee.

The Babbar Akali Prisoners

The other, while completely dissociating the League from violence, viewed with horror the punishment meted to the Babbar Akalis, and expressed heart-felt sympathy with the families of those who had been executed or imprisoned in connection with the Babbar Akali case.

There was some opposition to this resolution from a section of the audience, who said that the resolution, being controversial, ought not to have been put from the Chair, but eventually the objection was withdrawn, and the resolution adopted.

Communal Representation Condemned

The third resolution, which was moved by Sardar Singh, ran as follows:—"That the Sikh League strongly condemns the principle of communal representation after their experience of it during the last six years of Reforms. That the Sikhs are of decided opinion that communal representation has proved quite ineffective in safeguarding the interests of the Sikh minority in the Punjab. (b) That, instead of allaying the tension, the introduction of communal representation in the elected bodies and in the Services, has most deplorably embittered the feelings between the various communities inhabiting the Punjab. (c) That the Sikh League strongly appeals to other communities to give up communal representation in the best interests of the country."

The resolution which was debated for over two hours was carried by an overwhelming majority, after an amendment had been moved and rejected. The amendment demanded that, so long as the principle of communal representation existed in the Indian Constitution, representation should be conceded to the Sikhs in the various legislatures and local bodies, on the same basis as in the case of the Mussalman minority in other provinces and Anglo-Indians in Bengal.

The League then adjourned to meet again in the evening when after three and half hours' further discussion of the resolutions, the League concluded its sessions and the delegates and visitors dispersed amidst great enthusiasm.

The Coming Elections

When the League met in the evening a number of important resolutions were passed, there being little difference of opinion amongst the delegates. The following are some of the important resolutions passed:—The League ratified the resolution of the General Committee, passed in 1923, and further resolved that the forthcoming elections for the various legislatures should be run in co-operation with the Indian National Congress. The League called upon the Sikh Community to issue a clear mandate to the candidates to demand full responsible Government for India. The League regretted that there was no change for the better in the attitude of

the Government in dealing with political questions and opined that there could be no peace between the people and the Government unless full responsible Government was introduced.

To compel the Government to yield to the National demand for full responsible Government, the League strongly recommended village organisation, use of Khaddar, promotion of inter-communal unity, national education and arbitration in private disputes and boycott of titles and intoxicants.

Release of Gurdwara Prisoners Demanded

The League while admitting Sirdar Khaddar Singh and other Gurdwara prisoners for not giving any under-taking to the Government to secure their release, strongly condemned the attitude of the Government in not releasing the remaining Gurdwara prisoners unconditionally, when the Gurdwara Act had been passed and the S. G. P. C. had begun to work it.

Resolutions were also adopted appreciating the sacrifices of the persons sent to jail in 1914 sympathising with their families and strongly condemning the repressive policy persisted in by the Government during the last five years.

S. African Issue

The League whole-heartedly supported the position taken up by the Indians in South Africa, and strongly condemned the unjust and inhuman laws proposed to be enacted in that country, and regretted that the Government of India had not done all that lay in its power to bring to their senses the White settlers.

The Nabha Abdication

Resolutions were passed regarding the Nabha question, holding that the Maharaja's abdication was not voluntary, and condemning the Government of India for not taking steps in the right direction to undo the great injustice done to a popular Prince, and sympathising with all the Nabha State subjects who had suffered for the sake of the Maharaja, and with the Maharaja and his family in his present tribulation and expressing anxiety at the proposal to remove the Tikka Sahib from His Highness, and severely criticising the action of the present Nabha administration in recklessly selling and auctioning His Highness' property inside and outside the State.

Baba Gurdit Singh gladly consented to personally convey the Nabha resolutions to the Maharaja at Dehra Dun.

President's Closing Remarks

In closing the session, Baba Sahib exhorted the Sikhs to continue to agitate for the triumph of the just cause of their community and country in co-operation with the other communities. He warned the Government against the results of losing the goodwill of subjects by continued flouting of popular wishes and demands. Such indifference on the part of the Government he said, brought harm equally to the Government and the governed.

The Bengal Provincial Conference

KRISHNAGAR—22ND & 23RD MAY 1926.

The session of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Krishnagar commenced on Saturday the 22nd May at 2-30 P.M. The proceedings in the open conference, as well as in the Subjects Committee meetings were marked by animation throughout and uproarious scenes at times gave expression to the high tension of feeling. For days before the conference met it was known throughout Bengal that the only issue before the conference would be the Hindu-Moslem Pact adopted by the Serajunge session of the conference three years ago at the instance of the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das. Notice of resolutions to rescind the Pact had been given by many delegates, among whom were some prominent Swarajists. As the delegates arrived and views were exchanged it was found that overwhelming majority of them were in favour of rescinding the Pact. The leaders of the Swarajya Party, feeling that the situation was hopelessly against them, were busy devising means to shelve the issue. Fortune favoured them. The issue was complicated by the conduct of the President himself (who by the way was a pro-pactist and expressed himself so in the Presidential speech). The President had in his speech made some uncharitable and unwarranted insinuations against certain Congress workers, describing them as "marked people" and advising them to withdraw from the Congress organisations. He had also made serious reflections on persons whom he described as the party of violence, imputing to them cowardliness, dishonesty and worst vices. These expressions of opinion, as soon as they came to be known on the eve of the conference provoked a great outburst of feeling and for the moment the Pact issue was side-tracked.

The President began to read out his speech and was heard with attention. Curiosity rose to the highest pitch as to what would happen when he should reach the offending portion of his speech. It had been passed from mouth to mouth that a protest would immediately be made and a large number delegates would leave the Hall. The President, however, stopped short as he reached the paragraph and addressing the House said that it had been reported to him that many of the delegates did not like the views he had expressed in the para he should read now. If it was so, he would leave it out of his speech. "Yes; yes, we object"—came the reply from all parts of the House. "Well then, I leave it out." "Apologise!"—shouted some and a confusion ensued. The President was heard making the remark that since the delegates did not want him, he would leave the Conference. So saying he left the rostrum. Pandemonium reigned in the Hall for some time till Mrs. Sarojini Naidu rose from her seat and immediately there was hushed silence to hear her. "Shall I ask the President in your name to come back"—she concluded after a fine short speech. "Yes, yes"—the reply went forth. Mrs. Naidu stepped down and a minute or two afterwards Mr. Sasmal was seen again on the rostrum and was greeted with thunderous applause.

The speech was a long one covering 34 closely printed foolscap pages. Many of the delegates began to leave the Hall among them being the oppositionists. The latter were absent when Mr. Sasmal read certain other portions of the speech to which objection was raised at the meeting of the Subjects Committee next morning. It was half past five when he finished reading his speech which had taken full three hours.

The Subjects Committee Meeting—22nd May.

The first meeting of the Subjects Committee to consider the resolutions that would be placed before the Conference began at 7 P.M., on Saturday the 22nd May. The Pact was virtually the one subject that was discussed and debated with considerable animation. The division was taken at about midnight. Votes were counted twice. The President declared on the second time that the House was equally divided. He gave his casting vote against the abrogation of the Pact, and refused to accede to the demand for a poll amidst cries of "shame, shame."

The Subjects Committee Meeting—23rd May.

The Subjects Committee met for the second time on Sunday the 23rd May in the morning. Mr. Suresh Chandra Majumdar moved a resolution expressing the opinion of the House that the Congress organisations of Bengal are not in any way influenced or controlled by any party of violence and this Conference dissociates itself from the opinion of the President expressed in his speech and respectfully request the Reception Committee to expunge the portion from the Presidential Address. Mr. Upendra Nath Banerjee, Mr. Sham Sunder Chakravarty, Mr. A. C. Banerjee and many others supported him.

A point of order was raised as to whether such a motion could be brought forward before the House. The President without giving a ruling left the matter to be decided by the House which favoured a discussion.

A general discussion followed and the motion was opposed by several Swarajists. At this stage Mrs. Naidu addressed the House and said that a greater partition of Bengal was being enacted before their very eyes as a result of which disunion and bitterness would prevail in Bengal and tarnish her fair name.

Claiming to know more of the temperament of the Bengalees, Mr. Shamsundar Chakravarti assured Mrs. Naidu that just as they unsettled the settled fact of Lord Morley in spite of difference of opinion, so would they succeed this time too to bring about unity amongst themselves in spite of temporary differences.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta moved as an amendment that this Conference dissociates itself from the opinion of the President expressed in connection with terrorist methods.

Mr. A. C. Banerjee moved as an amendment to add "and deprecates" after the words "dissociates itself from." Mr. Sen Gupta accepted the amendment. The mover of the resolution also accepted the amendment.

Mr. S. N. Biswas moved to delete the word "deprecate." Mr. B. N. Sasmal at this stage stated that if this motion was passed, he would treat it as a vote of no confidence in him and would resign the presidentship.

Mr. B. K. Lahiri tried to persuade the President not to interpret the motion as a vote of censure. He said they had allowed their President his right of freedom of expression and they claimed the same freedom for themselves.

After nearly two hours' discussion the amendment to delete the word "deprecate" was put to vote and lost and the motion of Mr. Sen Gupta was carried by an overwhelming majority.

The President then vacated the chair.

Mr. Upendra Nath Banerjee moved that Mr. Sasmal do take the chair. But somebody pointed out that the Subjects Committee could not, under the rules, elect its Chairman. An uproarious discussion followed. After the first excitement had subsided, Mr. Hemanta Sarkar pointed out that under the rules the Subjects Committee could not elect a President which is the function of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. The meeting then dispersed.

Meeting of the Delegates.

There was some uncertainty whether in view of the resignation of the President, the Conference would meet at all. Some persons went about saying that the Conference would not meet. Eventually however it was decided that the delegates should meet at the pandal at the time appointed for the Conference to consider the situation. Accordingly the meeting began at 2-30 P.M.

At the outset Mr. B. K. LAHIRI, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, made a statement. He stated that a certain resolution had been adopted at the morning's meeting of the Subjects Committee which was treated by the President as a vote of no-confidence in him and he (President) thereupon said that he would not continue to preside over the proceedings of the Subjects Committee as well as of the Conference and that he had withdrawn from the meeting of the Subjects Committee. Thus a deadlock had been created and it was for the delegates to decide as to what should be done under the circumstances. He requested the House to elect a chairman for the time being for the purpose of discussing what should be done.

Mr. J. M. SEN GUPTA was elected chairman. He said he saw Mr. Sasmal after the morning incident and what he gathered from him was that Mr. Sasmal might come to the Conference at their request to explain what happened in the Subjects Committee and if after hearing his statement the delegates passed a resolution disapproving of the Subjects Committee's decision he might preside over the Conference. He invited definite suggestions in the shape of resolutions from delegates.

The discussion was initiated by Sj. Mrinal Kanti BASU who moved the following resolution :—

That this meeting of the delegates is decidedly of opinion that it is the duty of the President to come and preside over the Conference and place before it for consideration any resolution or resolutions that may have been passed by the Subjects Committee. That the Secretary of the Reception Committee do immediately send a message to the President with a copy of the above resolution and request him on behalf of the delegates to come and preside over the Conference. That this meeting of the delegates adjourns for half an hour to wait for the arrival of the President.

In moving his resolution Mr. Basu said that he had seen the President immediately after the dissolution of the Subjects Committee meeting and had pointed out to him that he (the President) was not entitled to resign to the Subjects Committee and the Subjects Committee could not also accept his resignation, that it was open to the delegates assembled in the Conference to reject the resolution passed by the Subjects Committee which the President had considered as a mark of want of confidence in him and that the President should not deprive the delegates assembled in Conference an opportunity to express their own opinion. Mr. Basu said that Mr. Sasmal had refused to come in spite of the legal position thus explained to him and had said that he would be satisfied if the delegates met informally and rejected the resolution of the Subjects Committee, in which case he would come to preside over the Conference. In regard to the suggestion that a vote of confidence in the President should be passed by that meeting of the delegates, Mr. Basu said he was opposed to the idea, inasmuch as the delegates had no materials before them on which they could pass that vote, the proceedings of the Subjects Committee not being known to them.

Two other resolutions were also moved for passing a vote of confidence in Mr. Sasmal and for proceeding with the election of a President of the Conference. A debate lasting several hours ensued. Several speakers contended that according to the Rules it was only the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee that could elect a President of the Conference in the place of the President-elect in case of emergency due to the illness or resignation of the latter or otherwise. The opponents of this view pointed out that the rule covered only the situation before the meeting of the Conference as the word "President-elect" in the rule shows. There was nothing in the rule to cover the situation that has arisen due to the resignation of the President who had already presided for one day and was not therefore "President-elect." Mr. J. Chaudhury, Bar-at-Law, strongly supported this view.

An appeal was made to the Chairman, Mr. Sen Gupta, to decide on the point. He refused to take the responsibility but allowed speaker after speaker to harangue the House. He omitted also to put the resolutions moved to the vote. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chatterjee said that the manner in which the proceedings were being conducted would suggest only one conclusion, namely, that the object was to shelve the issue about the Pact. Mr. Sen Gupta paid no heed to the suggestion. It was now clear that obstructionist tactics were being adopted by those who wanted to retain the Pact. After several hours of desultory discussion as a Mahomedan gentleman under cover of speech-making was talking at random and making gesticulations, Mr. Sen Gupta suddenly dissolved the meeting saying that it was disorderly.

Mr. J. Chaudhury Elected President.

Several Swarajists and pro-pactists headed by Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta then left the place, but the major section of the House continued the meeting with Mr. J. Chaudhury as President and declared the meeting to be the Conference.

The Conference passed resolutions of condolence on the deaths of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee, Rai Yatindra Nath Chaudhury, and Maharaja of Nafore.

The second resolution was passed by the Conference with three dissentients and ran thus :—

This Conference while deploring communal differences that have broken out in different parts of the country is of opinion that Swaraj is impossible unless unity between Hindus and Moslems is established and both forgetting communalism work together inspired by Nationalism. Therefore the Conference rescinds the Bengal Pact entered into at Berhampur as it is of opinion that that pact is based on communalism. With a view to bring about better understanding between the two communities this Conference requests the B. P. C. C., to form a committee consisting of Hindus and Mussalmans for the purpose of touring about in the mofussils to re-establish good-will and amity.

The last resolution passed by the Conference ran as follows :—

This Conference is decidedly of opinion that Congress organisations of Bengal are not in any way influenced by any party of violence in Bengal. Therefore this Conference dissociates itself from and deprecates the opinion expressed by the President (Mr. Sasmal) in his address beginning with "those who believe in violence ought to keep aloof from the organisation. Those who have become notorious for any reason should also keep aloof from the Congress and above all the Congress must be weeded of those who have entered it in order to destroy it by treachery."

The Conference then adjourned 'since die.'

Mr. Sen Gupta's Statement.

Subsequently Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, issued the following statement to the Associated Press :—

Having regard to the fact that the session of the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Krishnagar under the presidency of Sj. B. N. Sasmal could not finish its deliberations I consider it my duty to make a statement for the information of the public and the members of the Congress. It is a matter of regret that Sj. Sasmal used certain expressions in his presidential address which appeared to a large number of delegates to cast an unwarranted aspersion on certain members of the Congress. One of these passages was deleted by the President while reading his speech. The proceedings of the Subjects Committee are ordinarily private but as I find that reports of what is supposed to have happened at the Subjects Committee meeting at Krishnagar have already appeared in the Press, I am obliged to refer in brief to some parts of the proceedings :—

On Sunday morning at the Committee meeting, the President was requested to delete another passage from his speech but he found himself unable to comply with the request. Thereupon a resolution dissociating themselves from and deprecating the sentiments expressed by the President in that passage was passed by a large majority of the members present although the President had made it clear that he would regard the passing of it as a vote of censure on him. The President resigned his office and left the meeting and did not subsequently take any further part in the proceedings. As no meeting of the Bengal Provincial Conference

could be held without a President a meeting of the delegates was held in the afternoon of Sunday over which I was elected chairman to consider what should be done in the circumstances. After a resolution recommending adjournment of the Bengal Provincial Conference 'sine die' had been negatived the meeting proceeded to consider the several ways by which they could hold the session under a proper and constitutional president. Several proposals, the substance of which is noted below, were discussed at the meeting, —

1. That a vote of confidence should be passed by the delegates and **Sr. Sasmal** should be requested to come back and preside.

2. That a new President should be immediately elected by the delegates present.

3. That the question of the fresh election of a president should according to a rule of the Bengal Provincial Conference be referred to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for final decision.

4. That since the Bengal Provincial Conference had no knowledge of what had happened at the Subjects Committee, the President should be requested to come and preside over the Conference.

5. That the resolution passed in the Subjects Committee concerning the President should be placed before the delegates' meeting and a vote taken thereon.

A few other similar proposals were also discussed.

As the discussion proceeded the meeting became so uproarious and uncontrollable and feeling ran so high that after repeated appeals for order I had no other alternative but to dissolve the meeting. No one in the circumstances questioned the propriety of my action at that time.

At a later stage, after the meeting had dispersed and most of the delegates had left, I understood that a meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Mr. J. Chowdhury. This meeting however had nothing to do with the Bengal Provincial Conference and the resolutions passed therein, if any, were unauthorised.

Under the Rules of the Bengal Provincial Conference in case of emergency arising due to vacancy occurring by reason of resignation, death or otherwise in the post of the President of the Bengal Provincial Conference, the matter should forthwith be referred to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee whose decision should be final.

In view of the references in certain section of the Press as to the alleged "Decent Burial of the Bengal Pact at the Krishnagar Conference" I ought to say one word. This matter of pact was brought before the Subjects Committee on Saturday last and the following resolution was passed:—

"That having regard to the present state of feeling the Committee should not recommend any resolution on the Serajunge Hindu-Moslem Pact to the open Conference."

In conclusion, I wish to make it perfectly clear that after the dissolution of the meeting of the delegates over which I presided there were no proceedings of the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Krishnagar on Sunday, the 23rd May and any resolution passed at any meeting subsequent to the dissolution of the delegates, cannot be accepted as the authoritative pronouncement of the Bengal Provincial Conference.

The Presidential Address.

Mr. B. N. Sasmal, who presided, delivered a very lengthy speech in Bengali, in the course of which he explained the meaning of Swaraj as he understood it. We give below a very brief summary of his presidential address. First, he referred to the spiritual Swaraj, the attainment of which was not practicable. Political Swaraj meant the acquisition of full independence for the people of India to protect the land from greedy eyes or alarming intrusions.

He next referred to the ways suggested for its attainment. Co-operation would never lead to their goal. Sweet reasonableness and speech-making would never help them. Even Civil Disobedience would not lead to political freedom. Civil Disobedience would lead to riot and even to revolution.

The only way to freedom, according to Mr. Sasmal, lay in what was commonly called revolution in its ideal way. By this he meant revolution without bloodshed or hatred. The addition of strength, moral, mental and physical, that would come on as a matter of course incidental to the preparation for the revolution, would go to solve many a problem which would follow in the train of the revolution. This method was far more constructive than other ways which were destructive.

As for Responsible Government Mr. Sasmal said changes in the administration would be in no distant date a matter of compulsion rather than option. His reasons for making this statement were based on the situation created in the East. Considerations of the Soviet menace, the greed of Japan, and the Yellow Peril on the one hand, and the change of mentality among the educated people and awakening of the masses in India on the other, would force the Britishers to grant full self-government to this country, for that was the only means for preserving the position of England in the East intact.

As regards constructive work, the President suggested the establishment of schools and colleges for imparting education on national lines and the improvement of health, removal of untouchability and elevation of the labouring classes.

Touching the question of the Congress and Council work, the President urged that until and unless their demands were fully realised they should not agree to accept membership of the Council.

The Communal Problem.

He next referred to the recent riots and observed that, if the affair had not been exaggerated by Mussalmans, it would probably have ended in an hour or two. Enumerating the causes of the riots the President said that the present administrative machinery was mainly responsible for all internal dissensions in the country. If the Government were in the hands of the people they could have already rooted out the causes of those disturbances by legislation. Some self-seeking mischief-makers were on the watch for an opportunity to cause quarrels between Hindus and Moslems. This event presented itself to them as a golden opportunity for fulfilling their nefarious

end. He suggested that the electioneering activity of the people had much to do with these riots. Had there been no talk of Ministerships before the submission of the report of the Royal Commission, he was emphatically of opinion that the things which had happened and were happening would never have taken place.

In conclusion the President said :—

From this very moment should go forth earnest appeals to all parts of the country for stopping for ever the barbarous practice of the exchanging of the names 'Mlecha' and 'Kafir' by Hindus and Moslems respectively. For this noble purpose books should be written by able writers which should be distributed broadcast free of charge so that they can reach every hearth and home. Some compromise between Hindus and Mahomedans with reference to the Services should also be made for the present. I humbly beseech leaders of both the communities and the press to avoid unpleasant truths at this critical time of the nation's life. They would perhaps agree to tolerate to some extent the evils of to-day for the sake of future good. None of the communities will be able to advance steadily on the way of nation-building unless we impress on the mind of one and all in this country this notorious fact that the administrative machinery, above all, is the fountain-head of all communal dissensions.

The Commonwealth of India Bill

The Karachi Conference.

Over 350 delegates and as many visitors were present on the 14th February at the Commonwealth of India Bill Conference at Karachi over which Dr. Besant presided. Delegates, belonging to different political parties, attended and they came from all important centres in Sindh. Among the visitors was Sir M. Visveswariah.

Mr. Vishindas's Welcome Address.

Mr. Harchandrai VISHINDAS, as Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed Dr. Besant to the conference in terms of warm praise. He observed that the Home Rule League and its propaganda, started by her, created a political consciousness in the people and instilled in them ideals of self-respect and independence. The people in England constantly asked, What did India want? The Commonwealth of India Bill furnished a reply in clear and precise language. The Right Hon'ble V. S. Sri Iyasa Sastri and several eminent men had worked in the National Convention, and the Bill must be considered as having the support of the best brains in the country. It had also the support, he declared, of persons like Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Moulana Shaukat Ali and Mr. Jayakar. Though the report of Swaraj Sub-Committee of the all Parties' Conference was not considered by the whole conference, at least the Bill introduced in Parliament bore traces of the report. He urged every lover of India to do his best to support the latest effort of Dr. Besant for the deliverance of India.

* After pointing out some of the important features of the Bill, which commended as specially noteworthy, such as the preamble, the abolition of the India Office, the revival of the ancient village system and the system of graded franchise, Mr. Vishindas concluded: "All that remains for me to add is that, whatever fate may be in store for the Bill at the hands of the present Conservative Ministry in England, Dr. Besant is entitled, to the lasting gratitude of India for the years of silent, patient labour which she and her colleagues have bestowed upon drawing up this, the first charter of India's liberty. As to our attitude towards the Bill, I cannot do better than quote the words of that noble son of India, the late Dr. Subramanya Iyer: "Simple reason and commonsense demand of such and everyone of us to ensure all the support possible to that latest and most promising outcome of her arduous labours, the preparation of a Constitution for adoption by the British Parliament."

Dr. BESANT on rising was greeted with prolonged applause. She spoke for more than one hour. She referred at the outset, to the curious manner adopted by the hostile critics of the Bill. At first it was called Besant's Bill, and the Calcutta "Statesman" gave its authorship to Sir Henry Slessor, Solicitor General of the late labour Cabinet. He was undoubtedly the best man for drafting Parliamentary legislation; but as a matter of fact, the changes made by him in the draft submitted from

India were very few, and did not touch either the principles of the Bill or the important details, except in one matter however, regarding Defence. Refusal to accept the modification would have meant wrecking the Bill: but except for that, the Bill provided that changes in the Constitution could be made in India without further reference to Westminster. Mr. Slessor called it an admirable Bill, and would have willingly backed it up in Parliament.

Referring to Mr. Harchandrai's remark, that it was a step on the road, she observed that it was a step which took the whole road, for it made India absolutely free in her own land. In one respect the Bill went further than Dominion Status, for no provision had been made for the power of veto or reservation for the Crown over legislation. She defended it on the ground that India could not trust England to use such a power, which no doubt existed in the Dominions, with fairness, and instanced the case of South Africa, whose Anti-Asiatic legislation was being permitted on the plea that it was a Self-Governing dominion and interference was impossible. If India were a Dominion, she would have penalised the American residents in the country, as Indian residents were by the decision of the American Supreme Court.

Dr. Besant asked the Conference to realise how complete the Bill was in giving freedom short of independence. She had never questioned India's right to independence. In England she had declared that the price of India's loyalty to Empire was freedom. But England and India together, would assure peace between the White and Coloured races, and safeguard the future of the world's Civilisation. She denied that it was her Bill, though she had a share in it. It would be folly to throw away the years of labour spent in drafting it. It was the first time a Bill for freedom for India had been introduced in Parliament, and it had been officially adopted by a party, which was in opposition and would form the next Government.

After detailed reference to local government which was, in her opinion, the Bill's most important feature, Dr. Besant proceeded to outline the course of action which the Conference should carefully consider if the Bill was rejected by Parliament. She thought it might come for discussion in the Lords, where it was sure of being rejected. She would appeal to the members of the Legislature to lead the people in a nation-wide agitation and also to reject budgets. "If the Legislature were dissolved would you?" Dr. Besant asked, "return the same men to the Councils?" Refusal of supplies was a perfectly constitutional step and it was the only way of winning freedom except by force. In the fight before them only one end was possible, because no nation had yet struggled for freedom without ultimate victory. She was visiting America in the Autumn, and hoped to place India's case before its public. Britain was sensitive to American opinion. The speaker might be away from India for a few months, but she would carry India in her heart, and where the heart was full lips would be able to speak.

Resolutions Passed.

• After her address, the following resolutions were adopted:—

• The National Congress of 1914, having declared that, in the reconstruction following the War, India should be placed on a footing of equality with the Self-Governing Dominion, this Commonwealth of India Bill Conference accords its whole-hearted support to the Bill, which embodies this demand and urges on the people of India to insist on its being made an Act of the Realm."

The resolution was moved by Mr. Pahlajani, Deputy President of the Bombay Legislative Council, and seconded by Mr. Gopaldas and supported by Principal Shahabi.

The second resolution, moved by Mr. Jethupal Parasmam, expressed the profound gratitude of the Conference to the Labour Party for its sympathy with India in her struggle for freedom, and particularly for its official acceptance of the Commonwealth of India Bill.

The third resolution thanked Major Graham Pole for his sacrifices and strenuous work for India and Mr. Shivarao for his able presentation of India's case in England.

The last resolution was as follows: "This conference tenders its most cordial thanks to Dr. Annie Besant for her devoted services in the cause of India's freedom and assures her of its determination to carry on an unceasing propaganda in favour of the Bill until its passage into law."

All the resolutions were unanimously adopted.

The Bombay Conference.

Another Conference of the Commonwealth of India Bill met at Bombay on the 7th May, with Mrs Naidu in the chair. There was a large attendance. Among those present were Messrs. B. S. Kamat, Jayakar, D. G. Dalvi, D. V. Gokhale and Bhopatkar.

Messages of Sympathy.

A number of messages expressing sympathy with the principles of the Bill were read including those from Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Hasan Imam, Sir C. P. Kamaswami Iyer, Mr. Chintamani, Pandit Hridaynath Kunzru, Sir Harising Gour and others.

Mr. N. C. KELKAR, Chairman of the Reception Committee, wished "Au Revoir" to Dr. Besant, and paid a tribute to her as the "only influential and active advocate of the cause of India in England." He welcomed the signs of reaction from the aversion to foreign propaganda that prevailed during the days of Non-co-operation.

Referring to the Bill, he said it should not be looked down upon because it took the form of constitutional agitation. None except a mere dreamer could hope for an immediate accident which might give them Self-Government without the agency of Parliament. The Bill was, after all, a token demand and they should welcome the Bill for two special reasons, firstly, because it gave a stunning reply to the objection that the demand of India for Self-Government was a vague one, and secondly, because the Bill opened up a vista of constructive thought in the wilderness of non-co-operation through which they had passed.

Mrs. NAIDU, in the course of her address, said that she presided over the Conference in her personal and private capacity. The Bill, in her opinion embodied the essence of the Indian demand and that was why she supported it. She emphasised the necessity of international propaganda. Mrs. Naidu drew pointed attention to Dr. Besant's speech at Ahmedabad in which she had declared her willingness to compromise with Indians with regard to the details of the Bill. Mr. Naidu concluded by wishing "Bon voyage" to Dr. Besant, and appealed for support to the Bill.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA BILL

Mr. B. S. HANMANT moved a resolution according to the support of the Conference to the Bill now before the Commons and upon Parliament the necessity of securing its second reading as soon as possible, so as to relieve the tension in India by securing to India the Dominion Status she deserved.

The resolution also requested that any amendments decided by organisations approving of the principles of the Bill be forwarded to the House of Commons Committee of the National Federation.

Mr. KARNAT said that the Bill represented India's demand, in many respects. It made clear that India wanted a Representative and Executive Government with full financial control.

Mr. JAYAKANT supporting, said the Bill dispensed with Dictatorship, which had been unanimously declared to be unworkable. It provided for the abolition of communal representation gradually within five years. It went to the very root of the Indian civilisation, namely the village and aimed at revitalising it. He wished that the Congress had supported the Bill.

Dr. Moonjee thought the Bill would counteract the effects of isolation in which India had so long stood.

After a few more had spoken giving their support to the Bill, Mrs. BESANT appealed to Britain to give India complete power within the Empire. She was sure that nothing could be refused by England, if the cause there was once again aroused in India as was prevalent in 1917. She was going across the Atlantic in order to counteract the propaganda carried on by Lord Sydenham and others. England had a heart which could be touched and it would be her endeavour to touch it by her work in America and in England.

